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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 2 October 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. de MARCO (Malta)

later: Mr. FLORES BERMUDEZ (Honduras)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
- Address by General Joao Bernardo Vieira, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau
- General debate [9] (continued)
- Address by Mr. Selim El-Hoss, Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic

Statements made by

Mr. Pinkayan (Thailand)
Mr. Evans (Australia)
Mr. Katopola (Malawi)
Mr. Traore (Guinea)
Mr. Dinka (Ethiopia)
Mr. Herat (Sri Lanka)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President MUGABE: Allow me, Sir, first of all to extend to you warm felicitations upon your election as President of the Assembly. We are fully confident that you will carry out the responsibilities of your high office with great skill and efficiency. The Zimbabwe delegation wishes you success and pledges to you its fullest co-operation.

Let me also take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Garba of Nigeria, for his able and inspiring leadership of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

The forty-fifth session of the Assembly meets at a historic turning-point in international relations. Since joining the community of nations, Zimbabwe, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, which was founded in the context of resistance to the formation of power blocs, has consistently argued against bloc politics. The dramatic developments we have witnessed since the opening of the last session portend a decade of the 1990s replete with fresh hopes and tantalizing possibilities. A few months ago, the leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), meeting in London, declared that the cold war was over and that they no longer regarded the countries of the Warsaw Pact as adversaries.

(President Mugabe)

Zimbabwe naturally welcomes and applauds this historic shedding of the cold war and of the bloc mentality that characterized it. It is a decisive development which opens real possibilities of crossing the threshold into a new international order in which mankind can at last be free from the fear of a nuclear conflict.

The easing of tensions between the two super-Powers has already yielded tangible results and generated some positive trends in international affairs. A new atmosphere now prevails in the international political arena. With bloc politics on the wane, attempts at distorting the struggle of peoples for independence and human dignity by placing them in the context of East-West rivalries have also lessened.

This positive trend enabled the United Nations finally to implement its plan for Namibian independence, enabling the Assembly to welcome a free Namibia to its midst last April. Also in Central America, Kampuchea, the Iran-Iraq conflict and Afghanistan, where previously the infusion of bloc politics had militated against peaceful solutions, the new international climate has allowed some movement towards resolution of those regional conflicts. At the international level, the new atmosphere has also made possible important agreements in the fields of disarmament and the environment and raised the general level of international co-operation.

As we stand at a historic moment when the collective efforts of all nations are directed towards the enlargement of international peace and security, we cannot suppress our dismay and revulsion at the incomprehensible and unfortunate act of aggression by a Member State against another, the invasion of Kuwait by the Republic of Iraq. By first invading and later annexing a sister State, both a Member of the United Nations and a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Iraq has violated the basic tenets of the Charter of the United Nations and those of the Non-Aligned Movement.

(President Mugabe)

Zimbabwe unreservedly condemns that act of naked aggression and calls upon Iraq, a friend and ally of Zimbabwe, to respect under international law the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait. Accordingly, Zimbabwe has already declared its preparedness to discharge its international obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter. Notwithstanding that policy position, we remain ready to resume normal and mutually beneficial relations with the Republic of Iraq.

Equally, we appeal to those States with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to be guided in their actions by the Charter. We affirm the right and responsibility of the Security Council to take decisions which help to defuse the crisis and to alleviate the suffering of various foreign nationals who were caught up in the conflict. We also wish to urge the Secretary-General to continue to explore all possibilities for ending the entire conflict at the earliest possible date.

Apartheid still remains a very strong fact of everyday life in South Africa, necessitating our continued attention to this issue. We are, of course, encouraged that many South Africans of all races are now agreed that apartheid has to give way to a new constitutional dispensation in that country, and we therefore appeal to their leaders, in particular to State President De Klerk and to Comrade Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), to persevere in their search for a peaceful end to apartheid. A process as historic as the one in which the South Africans are engaged is bound to attract the wrath of those elements bent on preserving a thoroughly discredited social order. In our view, the South African leaders should remain committed to the historic objective of realizing a new and democratic South Africa acceptable to the majority, if not to all the people of that country.

(President Mugabe)

The international community, for its part, must continue to send clear and unambiguous signals to the Pretoria authorities regarding its readiness to take collective action in the interest of peace in South Africa. To that end, we welcome the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on South Africa. In that Declaration, Member States agreed:

> "To ensure that the international community does not relax existing measures aimed at encouraging the South African régime to eradicate apartheid until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes ...". (A/RES/S-16/1, para. 9 (d))

At this historic moment for South Africa, the international community should be encouraged by the courage of South African leaders to meet the challenge before them. It would be most regrettable if some members of the international community unilaterally disengaged themselves from the commitments in the United Nations Declaration. Any such deviation would send negative signals which might act as an obstacle in the negotiation process.

We continue to be perturbed by a lack of progress towards a comprehensive solution to the Middle East question. In this context, we welcomed the initiation of the dialogue between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a useful exchange which could facilitate the removal of obstacles in the path towards a comprehensive resolution of the problem. We regret the interruption of that dialogue and hope that it will be resumed soon. We also call upon Israel to desist from settling arriving immigrants in the occupied territories, as such actions will lead to new antagonisms that can only make more difficult the search for solutions.

(President Mugabe)

There has been achieved a meeting of minds in the international community on the elements that could constitute a lasting solution to the Kampuchean question. We believe that a more constructive attitude from the parties directly involved would greatly assist in the search for such a solution. Meanwhile, we urge outside parties to refrain from supplying arms, which only help to fuel the conflict. To facilitate the search for a solution, it is also essential that the Supreme National Council agreed upon by the parties at the recent Jakarta meeting should be constituted without delay and be allowed to represent the Kampuchean people here at the United Nations

It is matter of deep regret that there has been no progress on the question of Cyprus over the past year. A solution to this important question will immensely contribute to reinforcing the current positive international climate. So, too, will all serious efforts aimed at uniting the two Koreas. This is why we welcome the meeting between the Prime Ministers of North and South Korea recently held in Seoul. We hope that the process of dialogue that is now under way will succeed in removing this unacceptable vestige of the cold war.

Threats to the prevailing international political climate do not emanate from these remaining unresolved regional crises alone. Other persistent and deepening economic crises threaten to undo the gains so far realized in the political arena. The economies of most countries in Africa, Latin America and West Asia continued to decline during the past decade under the crushing burden of debilitating external debt, the collapse of commodity prices and deteriorating terms of trade. The current volatility in the price of oil has further destabilized the already shaky world economy and wreaked havoc upon the economies of the energy-importing developing countries, such as my own. A further decline in the economic growth

(President Mugabe)

rates of most developing countries is now inevitable as a result of the crisis created by events in the Gulf.

The situation in the South is desperate. The World Bank, in its World Development Report 1990, reveals that in the 1980s there were over 1 billion people in developing countries classified as living in conditions of poverty, compared to 25 million in the developed countries. The World Bank further forecasts that the situation is unlikely to get better in the 1990s. In our age of the global village, it is inconceivable that nations can live in peace with each other in a world of such glaring disparities in the quality of life between the North and the South. The world does not have to wait for the eruption of a crisis of the nature we recently witnessed before addressing this problem. The question of equitable distribution of the benefits of development is not a case of being one's brother's keeper but rather one of sharing a common destiny.

A new era characterized by international co-operation aimed at resolving the problems afflicting the world economy is essential. Zimbabwe feels heartened that, arising from last April's special session on international economic co-operation, there is a new spirit and unanimous commitment by the international community to address the economic challenges facing the developed countries through international co-operation. It is indeed important that all the commitments contained in the Declaration adopted at that special session should be fulfilled. As Zimbabwe's contribution to the liberalization of international trade, the Government has adopted far-reaching economic policy measures. These are intended to liberalize trade and to revamp the national economy. Zimbabwe therefore wishes to appeal to the international community and to the various donors and multilateral economic institutions for support of our national efforts.

(President Mugabe)

The resolve that now exists within the international community to address the twin problems of environment and development within a multilateral framework is consistent with the prevailing spirit to tackle the common problems facing mankind through international co-operation. It is our expectation that the 1992 Brazil Conference will result in a set of measures and commitments that will provide the basis for future co-operative actions in preserving our common future. Zimbabwe is of the view that any measures aimed at assisting developing countries in protecting their environment should be directed more at the revitalization of their growth and development than at merely addressing the symptoms of the problem.

Another major gap that needs to be closed in order to sustain the current positive international political climate is in the area of disarmament. While initial steps have been taken towards a real reduction of the nuclear armaments of the two super-Powers after the signing of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles, known as the INF Treaty, mankind has not yet been freed from the fear of the threat of nuclear annihilation. The threat posed by the remaining huge arsenals of nuclear weapons and the apparent unwillingness of the nuclear Powers to abandon the doctrine of nuclear deterrence contain serious risks undermining the prevailing positive international climate.

We are encouraged by the progress made in the search among countries of the East and the West for an open-skies agreement. Zimbabwe is of the view that the confidence emanating from such an agreement would greatly contribute to the current relaxation of international tensions. For such confidence to be general and shared by all States, however, it is preferable that capabilities for taking advantage of the resulting transparency should be commonly shared.

(President Mugabe)

The bloc politics that had paralysed the Security Council are fast becoming a phenomenon of the past, and that body is apparently now in a position to play the role originally envisaged for it in the Charter.

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(President Mugabe)

It is our hope that the new partnership in the Security Council will not result in that body's being used as a tool to promote and further only the interests of the powerful at the expense of those of the weak. To this end, we expect that the Council shall all the time function in a responsible and objective manner in all cases in safeguarding the rule of law in international relations and the principles and purposes of the Charter.

Let me conclude by expressing the hope that at last the walls which separated the actions of Member States from the ideals and objectives of the United Nations Charter have also given way to a new United Nations, committed, in the words of the Charter,

"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...,

"to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person...,

"to establish conditions under which justice and ... international law can be maintained, and

"to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY GENERAL JOAO BERNARDO VIEIRA, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

General Joao Bernardo Vieira, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency General Joao Bernardo Vieira, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President VIEIRA (spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation): It is my pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your personal qualities have brought you to this lofty office and augur well for the success of our work.

I should like to welcome the delegation of Liechtenstein on that country's admission to membership of the United Nations.

(President Vieira)

My distinguished colleagues and brothers, Heads of States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), have done me the honour of entrusting me with the task of addressing the Assembly in order to mention the situation in the Sahel.

The peoples of the Sahel, through me, therefore, wish to express their pleasure in participating in this forum, and welcome the clarity with which the gravity of their specific problems has been perceived.

The nine States members with a population of 40 million human beings are pooling their efforts, and have been doing so for almost two decades, against the consequences of drought and desertification. But in the face of this challenge, they have never been alone. We must stress the unswerving solidarity which the Sahelian countries have enjoyed from the Members of this universal Organization.

The tragedy which has afflicted the peoples of the Sahel underlies the establishment by the United Nations of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), a body that tackles the problems of drought and desertification and its ill effects on the process of the development of these countries, which are confronted by the horrors of poverty, hunger and illiteracy.

It is fortunate that we can state that, in order to reduce the negative effects of these natural disasters that have afflicted the Sudano-Sahelian countries, the United Nations has recognized the importance of food security in the struggle against drought. The establishment of CILSS in 1973 and its adoption of a campaign against desertification reflect the importance which these States attach to this problem.

In this context, I must also mention that it is necessary to support the efforts of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which, by establishing the Sahel Club, has created an important instrument in the

(President Vieira)

co-ordination of the efforts of the Members of this Organization. The first generation programme, produced by CILSS, made it possible to mobilize considerable financial resources from 1976 to 1982 in order to accelerate the development of the region.

In spite of these measures, which are considerable, we have to note that they have been inadequate because of the innumerable difficulties confronting the Sahel. Many challenges remain to be confronted in this region: the economic situation, the preservation of the environment, health and education.

The effects of drought together with the world economic crisis constitute serious obstacles which our countries have to overcome in the difficult struggle for development and the ultimate materialization of the objective of improving the living conditions of the peoples.

The effects of development of the CILSS countries have been seriously jeopardized by the ill effects of the world economic system, characterized by the decline in the terms of trade, the drop in commodity prices, the drop in aid for development and the weight of external debt.

Given the gravity of these problems, serious problems confronting the countries of the Sahel, I am glad to stress, on behalf of my distinguished colleagues and brothers, who are Heads of States members of CILSS, that our Governments are seeking appropriate ways and means of effectively combating these scourges so as to improve the living conditions of our peoples.

We are convinced that we can count on the international community, which has given us its support over the last few years. We welcome the convening of an international Conference on Environment and Development, which has aroused considerable hope among our peoples.

I would like to take the opportunity to express the gratitude of the peoples

(President Vieira)

of the Sahel and of our respective Governments for the aid and solidarity which have been proffered. I am convinced that the response of the international community and the United Nations system will always live up to the nature and diversity of the problems to be faced.

Profound political changes are causing upheaval throughout the world. They are marked by the end of the cold war and the establishment of constructive dialogue among nations. However, the process of détente and the strengthening of world peace is a complex and long one, and should be viewed as a permanent task for all our countries.

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau, committed to the principles of the United Nations, wishes to repeat its condemnation of the violation and annexation of any country by another State Member of our Organization. The threat or the use of force in international relations is unacceptable.

Accordingly, my Government wishes to express its deep concern at the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, which constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security. Aware as we are of the perils inherent in the situation in the Gulf and its unforeseeable consequences, Guinea-Bissau exhorts Iraq to respect the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. Efforts must be continued and all the machinery capable of bringing about a peaceful solution to the conflict must be brought to bear.

The question of the Middle East has now assumed a new dimension in the light of new developments in the region. In this regard, we continue to support the idea of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all the parties concerned.

The independence of Namibia, which we would like to welcome once again, has

(President Vieira)

breathed new life into the process of the peaceful and comprehensive resolution of the problems of southern Africa, and has opened up encouraging prospects of peace in Angola and Mozambique.

We welcome the changes which have occurred in South Africa and the process of dialgoue which is under way. However, it is urgent to put an end to confrontation and violence so as to permit the establishment of a climate propitious for the continuation of the negotiating process, which should lead to the establishment of a non-racial and democratic system that would promote fraternal relations and relations of good understanding among all South Africans.

Bloody clashes in Liberia are another source of profound concern. We would appeal to the parties to the conflict to put an end to this fratricidal war which is tearing the country apart, causing the loss of innocent lives and destroying material property necessary for the development of the country.

The persistence of the occupation of East Timor, the inter-community confrontations in Lebanon, differences in the solution of the Cambodian problem and tensions in different parts of the world, in particular in the Korean peninsula and in Cyprus, are also grounds for concern.

I should like to stress once again the effective action of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the United Nations and, in particular, in the search for a peaceful solution for Western Sahara, and also his personal contribution to the strengthening of the role and prestige of the Organization.

(President Vieira)

The positive trends in the world today must be seized in order to guarantee a constant climate of dialogue among nations. We must, therefore, individually and collectively respect the principles of the Charter and international norms governing relations among States which have established the primacy of law over force and advocate negotiated solutions for all conflicts.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau for the important statement he has just made.

General Joao Bernardo Vieira, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY MR. SELIM EL-HOSS, PRIME MINISTER OF THE LEBANESE REPUBLIC

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic.

Mr. Selim El-Hoss, Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Selim El-Hoss and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. EL-HOSS (Lebanon) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I am confident that you are going to preside efficiently and successfully over the work of this session. I need not remind of the close ties that bind our two countries on every level.

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

On this occasion I should also like to commend the outgoing President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Garba, to whose friendly country, Nigeria, we are bound by ties of friendship and co-operation.

Also, I should like to extend our warm greetings to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and express our appreciation for his devotion to the cause of peace and his sincere concern over the suffering of my country, Lebanon. I should also like to pay tribute to the outstanding role played by our international organization under his leadership in tackling various regional and international issues. Thanks to the United Nations, smaller nations are given hope that under international law and norms of conduct their rights are protected.

I welcome Namibia, the new member of the United Nations, whose independence was the culmination of a ceaseless struggle by its people, in conjunction with an effective role played by our international organization in developing the machinery that realized that independence. As to Liechtenstein, we welcome it to the fold, wishing its delegation every success.

Lebanon is in the forefront of nations which uphold and believe in the Charter and the principles on which it is based. We also consider the United Nations, the alma mater of all international organizations, as the natural and appropriate forum for all peoples of the world in their pursuit of peace and security, stability and orderliness in international relations. Hence, we do not want Lebanon to witness in any way the failure of the United Nations either in resolving certain problems that beset small nations or implementing resolutions adopted by it or any of its organs.

For 15 years, Lebanon has been in the throes of an intractable crisis, the repercussions, manifestations and dimensions of which have brought it on numerous occasions to the attention of the Security Council, which adopted a series of

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

resolutions yet to be implemented. Meanwhile, the Lebanese crisis has grown in intensity and reached its peak in the stifling economic plight that Lebanon now suffers, not to mention the social and human tragedies and tribulations suffered by its people and the dangers that beset this small country and threaten its integrity and very existence.

In 1978, Israel invaded south Lebanon in the so-called Litani Operation and occupied large tracts of Lebanese soil, most of which are still under its control. The Security Council adopted resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) in the wake of that large-scale aggression wherein the Security Council called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanese territory and set up the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which was entrusted with the task of ensuring the complete withdrawal of the invading forces from Lebanese territory. UNIFIL, within the capabilities available to it, played a vital and constructive role which earned it the respect and gratitude of the Lebanese people. That force, however, was not enabled to fulfil the basic mandate entrusted to it, namely, that of ensuring the withdrawal of forces of aggression from Lebanese territory.

Meanwhile, two earnest attempts were made to send units of the Lebanese army, with the approval of the United Nations Secretariat and that of the UNIFIL Command in south Lebanon, in order to make headway in implementing United Nations resolutions in accordance with a specific plan aimed at enabling the Lebanese Government to restore its authority over certain parts of the occupied territory. The first attempt was made in 1978, when the Lebanese Government sent army units to the south through the eastern sector. These were stopped short of the occupied area under a barrage of bombardment by the Israeli forces and their proxies.

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

The second attempt was made in 1979 when the Lebanese Government sent a battalion to the coastal area to operate under the UNIFIL umbrella and participate in the implementation of a plan that aimed at liberating certain parts of the occupied area and placing them under UNIFIL control. Again, heavy shelling by Israeli forces and their puppets prevented the Lebanese battalion from reaching its assigned position.

Since then, Security Council resolution 425 (1978) has remained unimplemented, and its future seems to be limited to regular meetings of the Security Council to renew the mandate of UNIFIL for another period of time.

In the meantime, Lebanon has been the victim of repeated acts of aggression by land, sea and air which have claimed the lives of many innocent civilians and wreaked havoc on our infrastructure, property, installations and public utilities.

In 1982, Israel launched total war against Lebanon by breaking through the UNIFIL lines. It occupied large areas of Lebanese soil including, at that time, the capital, Beirut. In waging that war, Israel used the very latest state-of-the-art instruments of annihilation, indiscriminate killing and devastation unscrupulously and with extreme brutality and impunity.

The Israeli operations included the detention and kidnapping of many Lebanese citizens, a large number of whom still languish in Israeli jails and in prisons built inside the occupied Lebanese territory. Some of those prisons are inaccessible even to international humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Israel also confiscated Lebanese water resources in the South, including the tributaries of the Wazzani and Hasbani rivers. Lebanon has repeatedly voiced its concern over Israel's ambitions to grab yet more of Lebanon's water resources.

The forces of occupation have created and continue to create a new fait accompli situation in the occupied areas. This is reflected in Israel's economic

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

and social annexation of the border strip through a series of calculated measures that prove Israel has no intention of pulling out its forces of occupation in any foreseeable future. Those measures also indicate Israel's determination to isolate the border area from the Lebanese heartland and thus thwart action in the area by official Lebanese organs.

The Lebanese living under the yoke of occupation suffer the most hideous kinds of oppression and persecution. These practices, which run counter to the most rudimenatary principles of human rights, have been the subject of repeated condemnations by the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

The popular response to the Israeli occupation has been the emergence and growth of a valiant determined resistance movement through which the Lebanese people continue to assert their natural and legitimate right to freedom and sovereignty over their land and show their determination to regain that right regardless of the sacrifices involved.

As for the Lebanese Government, its only option has been to complain to the Security Council. The Security Council adopted several resolutions which condemned the Israeli aggressor. However, such condemnation has been to no avail. On several occasions, the Council even failed to adopt resolutions of condemnation because of the right of veto. In any case, Lebanon has not been able to obtain a single Security Council resolution imposing sanctions against the aggressor State.

In the last phase of the crisis, the Arab group laudably undertook to tackle the Lebanese question. The Arab summit conference, meeting in Casablanca, Morocco, decided to set up the Tripartite High Committee, composed of the King of Saudi Arabia, the King of Morocco and the President of Algeria. The Committee was entrusted with the task of addressing the situation in Lebanon and finding an effective solution to the problem that would deal with all its various dimensions.

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

The Committee's efforts came to fruition in a meeting held in the Saudi Arabian city of Taif under the auspices of the Committee and with the direct support of Syria; the meeting resulted in an agreement known as the Document of National Accord.

That was the starting point for the revival of our constitutional institutions. That process started with the election of the Speaker and the bureau of Parliament. This signalled the resumption of Parliament's activities after an interruption that had lasted nearly a year and was followed by the election of a new President of the Republic after that office had remained vacant for almost 14 months. A national unity Government was formed and the contents of the Document of National Accord provided its programme of action and has been translated into a constitutional law that has been ratified recently by the Lebanese Parliament.

However, the former commander of the Lebanese army persisted in his mutinous stand against legitimacy, thus leaving the country prey to division and in fighting the country's administration remained factionalized to a certain extent. Public facilities and many State resources continued to be usurped, while half the army, together with the bulk of its equipment and supplies, remained confiscated. Lebanon was left with bleak prospects and exposed to imported crises.

Here again the United Nations took sound, laudable positions which confirmed the international community's support for the legitimate Lebanese authorities through assistance in implementing the Taif agreement, condemnation of the mutiny against legitimacy and calling on all parties to adhere to the Taif agreement.

When Iraq invaded the State of Kuwait we took a clear explicit and principled stand. We strongly denounced the action, since it constituted a flagrant violation of international law, norms and instruments, especially the Charters of the United

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Nations and of the League of Arab States. Moreover, as a matter of principle, we cannot concede the right of the strong to swallow up the weak or of the large to ruin the small. Otherwise the law of the jungle would prevail in international relations to the detriment of weaker and smaller nations such as my own.

It is worth mentioning that the crisis resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait has had catastrophic economic and social effects on the internal conditions in Lebanon. This prompted us to undertake exceptional efforts with a view to ensuring the inclusion of Lebanon on the list of States adversely affected and in need of urgent foreign aid.

The crisis has created regional and global tensions, as is evident from the mobilization of major international military forces in the Arab region. This sets the region atop a volcano on the verge of a massive eruption. If the invasion had resulted only in plunging the Arab nations into great divisions, if it had only brought enormous international military forces and infinite danger to the region, that alone would have been reason enough to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Hence our support for all resolutions adopted in the framework of the League of Arab States, at the level of the summit and at that of Foreign Ministers, and for all the resolutions of the Security Council.

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

However, when we recall all relevant Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 661 (1990), which provides for the imposition of international sanctions against Iraq to deter its aggression, we cannot but recall once more the Lebanese situation. Since 1978, Lebanon has been the victim of aggression by Israel, which has continued to flout the resolutions of the Security Council. Resolution 425 (1978) has remained unimplemented for more than 12 years. Numerous other resolutions subsequently adopted by the Security Council have met a similar fate.

Therefore, just as we have supported Security Council resolution 661 (1990) imposing sanctions against Iraq for its occupation of Kuwait, we have repeatedly called in the past and we call again today for the application of the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter against Israel for its continued occupation of Lebanese territory, in violation of international law and international instruments, and in defiance of the international will expressed through the resolutions of the United Nations and the Security Council. In doing so, we are merely giving voice to our belief that the international Organization must remain the natural refuge for those nations which fall victim to aggression. If we respect the resolutions of the United Nations, it is because we believe that they are just. In international justice, there must be no double standard.

We cannot mention Lebanon without speaking of Palestine, the most chronic of all the explosive issues in the Arab region, in the Middle East, even in the world. The right of Palestinians to national determination is a self-evident human right. How can the United Nations realize its lofty mission on behalf of human civilization or endeavour to lay down the foundations of justice, stability and peace in the world while the Palestinian population remain displaced, exiled from homeland and deprived of the most rudimentary of human rights, namely, the right to self-determination?

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

Until such time as Israel recognizes the right of Palestinians to self-determination, it is no wonder that they should continue their glorious intifadah against occupation, usurpation and injustice. In defiance of every method of oppression and abuse, the Palestinian people continue to reject Israel's expansionist policy of settler-colonialism at the expense of their self-evident right to existence.

The records of the United Nations are replete with resolutions relevant to the question of Palestine. Is it not time for the international Organization to take decisive and effective measures in order to compel Israel, the aggressor State, to heed its resolutions on this question?

My people, like every other people in the Arab region, is gravely concerned about Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and elsewhere to the occupied land of Palestine and the threat that this migration poses to the right of the Palestinian people to their land and to the stability of the whole region. My people, like every other people in the Arab region, live under the terrible threat arising from the acquisition by Israel of nuclear weapons, especially in view of the aggressive and expansionist nature of its policies. Therefore, it is no wonder that we associate ourselves with those who have already called for the declaration of the Middle East region as a zone free of weapons of mass extermination, namely nuclear bombs, in the interests of world peace.

Lebanon stands today at the threshold of a new age, hoping that it will be one of stability, peace and reconstruction. Today, Lebanon needs the support of the international community in order for it to be able to cross this threshold. It will also need the support of the international community tomorrow and day after tomorrow in order for it to regain its health and strength and resume the process of growth and reconstruction.

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

Hence, Lebanon's insistence that the international community should continue to support it in liberating its soil from Israel's occupation through the implementation of resolution 425 (1978) which was adopted by the Security Council 12 years ago. There can be no peace or stability in Lebanon so long as Israel's aggression against it persists. This also implies the lifting of Israel's hand from the water resources in southern Lebanon.

My country, Lebanon, is now seeking the necessary foreign assistance to cope with the tragic social and economic crisis which engulfs it, be it the result of the accumulated effects of 15 years of bloody events or the serious consequences of the Gulf crisis.

Lebanon attaches great importance to the success of the project called the International Fund to Assist Lebanon, sponsored by the High Arab Committee, which aims at organizing joint international action in support of the large-scale reconstruction effort that Lebanon has to undertake, God willing, in the coming stage of stability and peace.

If things proceed as planned on those levels, Lebanon, reborn, will be the best living proof of the historic achievements heralded by the international community through its solidarity, firm determination and sound orientation.

My country, Lebanon, wounded and bleeding, has remained, even under the bleakest of conditions, conscious of its responsibilities towards the international community and has never renounced the aspiration to resume its constructive, creative and natural role in the service of progress and peace in regional and international arenas.

We hope that the era of international détente, the dawn of which we are witnessing today, will usher in a relaxation in international relations, engender peaceful solutions for the regional problems of the world and put a decisive end to

(Mr. El-Hoss, Lebanon)

Power rivalry at the expense of the interests of the small, peace-loving nations. We hope that the understanding between the two super-Powers will be the launching pad for a new order that will be based on the consolidation of the rule of international law and the strengthening of its machinery, especially the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lebanese Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Selim El-Hoss, Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. PINKAYAN (Thailand): On behalf of the Thai delegation, I should like to extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-fifth session. I should also like to pay a tribute to Mr. Joseph Garba, President at the forty-fourth session, for his effective leadership during the past 12 months.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

We are witnessing and living in a most remarkable period in world history. A new world order seems to have dawned. Until August 1990, the nations of the world were steadily moving towards accommodation, transcending the ideologies which, for most of this century, divided the peoples of the world. Since the beginning of this year, the East-West cold war appears to have ended. The dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the imminent reunification of Germany serve to underscore this fact. The only jarring note in this hopeful scenario occurred in the Persian Gulf. Even so, and from the vantage-point of the United Nations, there seems to have emerged an unprecedented degree of unity among nations, as evidenced by the remarkable number of resolutions adopted by the Security Council aimed at restoring peace and security in that region of the world. Thailand stands firmly with the international community in its support of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council. We cannot condone the use of force in violation of the United Nations Charter and of international law anywhere in the world.

The activity and the resolve of the United Nations in the Iraq-Kuwait conflict reflect, in an unprecedented fashion, a willingness on the part of the international community to allow the world body to play the role envisaged by its founders. Indeed, over the past 12 months, the nations of the world have looked to the United Nations to bring about a settlement of numerous and long-standing regional issues - in Africa, in Asia and in Central America.

In North-East Asia, developments concerning the Korean peninsula continue to be very important for the question of peace and stability in that region. For this reason, the unification initiative by President Roh Tae Woo deserves serious consideration. Furthermore, we would welcome any move by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea to join this Organization if they so desire, for we believe in the principle of universality of membership of the United Nations.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

In numerous instances, especially in recent times, the United Nations and its peace-keeping operations have proved to be indispensable as instruments of peace. For these successes, the Secretary-General and his staff and, in particular, the United Nations peace-keeping forces, deserve to be commended. United Nations peace-keepers have gone beyond the role of merely separating hostile forces to include peace-making endeavours. The administration of free and fair elections by the United Nations is a very important component of this. Indeed, a number of countries have been actively exploring the possibility of utilizing the United Nations in just such a manner. One country that stands to benefit is Cambodia.

One of the first major policy pronouncements of the Thai Government under Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan two years ago was that of turning the battlefields of Indochina into a market-place. This is in keeping with the positive trends that have been becoming evident in international relations. These are the trends towards peace and accommodation. Regional conflicts are on the wane. Governments everywhere are turning their energies towards modernizing their countries and enhancing the quality of life of their peoples. The same is true for most of the countries of South-East Asia, especially those in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). We are at peace, growing and prosperous. We comprise one of the fastest-growing regions in the world. An exception, however, is Cambodia. The Cambodian people continue to suffer from the war, which has lasted for more than two decades. This has to come to an end. The fighting must stop so that the Cambodians and the international community may be able to work together to restore peace and to lay the groundwork for progress and prosperity for the Cambodian people.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

As Cambodia's neighbour, Thailand is in a good position to help. In February this year, Bangkok was offered as the site of a meeting between Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Mr. Hun Sen. This, I believe, facilitated the convening of the informal meeting on Cambodia in Jakarta as well as the subsequent meeting in Tokyo in June.

Thailand welcomes and greatly appreciates the efforts of others who have been deeply involved. I would like to commend the Secretary-General and his able assistants for their tireless efforts. I would also like to encourage them to forge ahead with preparations for the important and enhanced role of the United Nations in the settlement of this conflict and in the transition to normalcy in Cambodia. The efforts of Australia to bridge the differences among the various parties and to bring them closer together is also instrumental in bringing us to the stage at which we are now.

A very important step in the peace process for a political settlement in Cambodia has come from the five permanent members of the Security Council during these past few months. At their meeting in August, they were able to reach agreement on a framework for a comprehensive settlement. The document produced by the five permanent members was a result of skilful diplomacy, for which they should be warmly congratulated. This led to the historic informal meeting on Cambodia in Jakarta early in September under the leadership of Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia. At that meeting that document was accepted by all the Cambodian factions in its entirety. In addition, an agreement was reached on the formation of a Supreme National Council (SNC) in the interim period, pending elections under United Nations administration and supervision. This was indeed a very important breakthrough.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

After the conclusion of the Jakarta meeting, the Thai Government was requested to organize the first meeting of the SNC to elect its chairman and to form a Cambodian delegation to the current session of the General Assembly. Unfortunately, this attempt was not successful.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

However, the Thai position on the peace process in Cambodia is clear and consistent. The Thai Government hopes the SNC will commence its work without delay in consultations with the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council, especially the five permanent members, in order to ensure that the United Nations is enabled to play an active role. Thailand reiterates its full support for the United Nations and the Secretary-General in assisting the Cambodian people and the SNC in this crucial transition leading to free and fair general elections in Cambodia.

There are other urgent issues which must be addressed. Important components of the settlement process must be further elaborated before the reconvening of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia (PICC). The outstanding questions must be resolved as soon as possible so that the transition to normalcy in Cambodia will be smooth and efficacious. The Thai Government stands ready to join the other participants in the PICC whenever the Co-Chairmen - France and Indonesia - deem it appropriate to reconvene the Conference.

Recent developments augur well for the Cambodian people. As a neighbour of Cambodia, Thailand will work closely with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the co-chairmen of the PICC, the five permanent members of the Security Council and all other interested countries and parties to help ensure that peace and harmony, progress and prosperity return to Cambodia very soon.

Thailand's hope of seeing the transformation of the battlefields into market-places extends beyond Cambodia to all the countries of Indo-China, and also Myanmar. We believe that the successful integration of these countries, with ASEAN, into a broader regional economic system will be in our common interest. We stand ready to contribute to such integration, which we believe will enhance the economic performance of the Asia-Pacific region.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

The economic performance of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole has been impressive. In the period from 1987 to 1989, real economic growth averaged 4.2 per cent for the members of Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), nearly twice that of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Trade between the APEC countries constituted over half of all APEC trade. The outlook remains bright for the period 1990 to 1991. Foreign investment within the APEC region has contributed to this happy trend.

Although trade between the APEC countries and economies has been dynamic, APEC is not a trading bloc. Its aim is not to compete with existing institutions. On the contrary, APEC is a reflection of the strong commitment of countries in the region to free trade and the spirit of multilateralism. It may, indeed, contribute to the ongoing General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiating process and the Uruguay Round.

We will have to wait and see what APEC will be able to achieve in real terms and in the long run. But I am convinced that APEC reflects greater economic interdependence among its members and reinforces it, thereby facilitating regional peace and co-operation in the spirit of the United Nations Charter.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, events of the past few months have shown the United Nations to be a vital mechanism for the maintenance of international peace and security. We also know that the United Nations has been, and continues to be, an instrument that can enhance the social and economic development of our peoples. We like what we have seen, and wish to encourage the United Nations to have an ever-increasing role in these directions.

In all this, the Secretary-General has emerged as a central figure. He has proven time and time again that he is a skilful and capable diplomat. His tireless efforts and his contributions to world peace have been vital. The international community owes him a vote of thanks.

(Mr. Pinkayan, Thailand)

As for you, Mr. President, you have a long and important session of the General Assembly ahead of you. It is a great responsibility and a challenge. I have no doubt that you will excel in your task. I wish you every success.

Mr. EVANS (Australia): It is with great pleasure, Sir, that I congratulate you on your election to the presidency of this General Assembly, a role for which your extensive experience in international relations, your legal training and your interest in human rights qualify you highly. The excellent relationship between Australia and Malta is of long standing, based on extensive family and community ties as well as on our strong and active membership of the Commonwealth, and we do look forward to working very closely with you. I would also like to join others in extending warm welcome to Namibia and Liechtenstein, the newest Members of the United Nations.

We meet today in the General Assembly on the eve of the recreation of a united Germany, an event which marks, as no other could do so clearly, the end of the post-war era. It is an era which has been dominated by the cold war and nuclear confrontation, but which has also seen extraordinary change: the end of the European colonial empires and the re-emergence of the independent nations of Africa and Asia; the economic reconstruction and ever closer political association of Western Europe; and, starting with the creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the growth of multilateralism on a remarkable and unprecedented scale.

However, the post-war era has left for us many problems that still remain to be solved. Iraq's aggression in the Gulf has shown that the habits of millenia are not going to change overnight, and that the arrogance of military power remains a scourge with which the world will still have to deal.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

The scourges of hunger, ill-health, poverty and debt also remain to an intolerable extent, threatening to widen rather than narrow the already alarming gulf between North and South. The scourge of racism, and ethnic and religious hatred, still remains to be purged from many countries and regions. And there is another scourge - the impact of human activity upon the sustaining environment of our planet itself - a scourge whose magnitude we are only now beginning to recognize.

The challenge for us all in the new era ahead of us, as relationships, policies and attitudes that had been frozen for so long continue to unfreeze, as the cold war becomes the great thaw, is for us to confront and overcome these scourges once and for all. If that is to happen, we will need, above all else, to develop habits of mind which are co-operative rather than confrontational, and habits of action which are instinctively multilateral.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Whether the challenge goes to the physical security of nations, the economic health of their peoples, the environmental integrity of the planet itself, or any other problem that no nation can solve wholly by itself, we have to derive inspiration from the thought that we are one world and can each survive only if we can all act collectively.

There is nothing inevitable about the development of any such approach, although events of recent weeks and months can certainly give us heart. The trends that will shape the new era are our own to make. Indeed, it is the actions over the next few years of the very men and women who have been assembled in this building over the last week that will launch that era for good or for ill. The world has been given a second chance, and this time we must not again take a false turn.

How we shape the security system of the new era is being comprehensively tested at its outset by the present Gulf crisis. If unity holds in this instance, if the community of nations, acting together under the authority of the United Nations Charter and with the full support of the Security Council, succeeds in demonstrating beyond doubt that aggression does not pay and cannot succeed, then that demonstration effect will weigh heavily on those nations, particularly those with great comparative regional power, which might in the future be tempted to settle disagreements by intimidation and force. If our resolve weakens, the demonstration effect will be equally convincing in its message that the international community is powerless to enforce decisions that we all recognize to be just. Such an outcome is unthinkable.

The crisis in the Gulf can be only resolved on the basis of the conditions set by the United Nations Security Council resolutions being fully and unequivocally met, that is, by Iraq's complete withdrawal from Kuwait, the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti Government, and the release of all foreign nationals who want to

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

leave. It is Australia's hope that those objectives can be met through the rigorous application of sanctions pursuant to Security Council resolutions 661 (1990), 665 (1990) and 670 (1990). Military-strike action cannot and should not be wholly ruled out at the end of the day should all other means of resolving the crisis fail, but Australia shares the universal hope that sanity will prevail and that a peace without appeasement will be achieved without the horrors of war having to be contemplated.

We can draw both encouragement and hope for the future from the unprecedented level of international co-operation to meet the crisis, co-operation that has enabled the Security Council to respond promptly and effectively and has restored the Council to its proper central place in international security. The greater willingness of the five permanent members of the Security Council to work together has not only held the line in the Gulf crisis, but has been a crucial factor in what we now hope is the imminent resolution of the Cambodian problem - a problem that not only has involved many years of tragedy for the Cambodian people, but has been a severe ongoing challenge to the security of the South-East Asia region.

A detailed framework for a comprehensive Cambodian settlement has been drafted and agreed by the Permament Five over the course of this year, and has now been accepted in its entirety by a meeting of the Cambodian parties convened by the Paris Conference co-Chairmen in Jakarta last month. That framework document - based in significant part, we are gratified to note, on ideas developed by Australia for an enhanced United Nations role - involves two central components: first, the creation of a fully representative Supreme National Council to embody the sovereignty of the Cambodian nation; and, secondly, a role for the United Nations that extends not only to traditional peace-keeping activity and an increasingly common electoral organization, but also to responsibility for key elements of civil administration in the transitional period pending free and fair

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

elections. The Supreme National Council has been formally established. It will occupy the Cambodian seat in the United Nations, and the process of putting in place a final comprehensive settlement, endorsed by a reconvened Paris Conference, is well under way. A number of matters, procedural and substantive, do remain to be negotiated, and there is bound to be some faltering before the process is complete, but the commitment of relevant countries and parties to finally achieving peace is now such that it is possible, after years of frustration and disappointment, to be much more optimistic than ever before that a durable peace will shortly be achieved.

For some other long-running regional conflicts the outlook is much less bright. Pre-eminent among them is the Palestinian issue, which, whatever the outcome of the Gulf crisis, will simply not go away until it is resolved in a manner that meets the basic needs and aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis. Australia has consistently expressed support for a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli dispute on the Palestinian issue on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We assert Israel's right to live within secure and recognized borders, but we also acknowledge that of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including its right to an independent State if it so chooses. We regard the proposals for the establishment of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue as a step towards the achievement of a peaceful settlement, and encourage all the involved parties to pursue that dialogue with real and sustained commitment.

One aspect of the issue that continues to hinder the peace process is General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX) of 1975 equating Zionism with racism. Australia remains strongly opposed to that resolution, which only exacerbates the differences between the parties. We hope that, with the revitalization of its role and responsibilities in promoting international co-operation, the United Nations will rescind the resolution.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Another Middle East issue of continuing concern, as we heard earlier this afternoon, is the situation in Lebanon, a country torn apart by conflict for 15 years now. The Taif Agreement, concluded in October last year by the Lebanese themselves with the support of the Arab League, represented a welcome breakthrough. The international community should stand ready to assist Lebanon in achieving peace, but the essential requirement is that there be a commitment from all the parties in Lebanon to national reconciliation, and a willingness to compromise to arrive at a negotiated solution. If anything has become clear over the last 15 years, it is that a lasting solution cannot be imposed by force.

The continuing troubles in Cyprus are another instance of entrenched attitudes making reconciliation extremely difficult. The failure of the attempt to revive the intercommunal talks in February was particularly disappointing. Prospects for progress will remain bleak unless there is a real determination to succeed on both sides and a willingness to enter into negotiations free of pre-conditions. Australia continues to support the efforts of the Secretary-General to promote a negotiated solution, in the belief that that is the route by which a just settlement is most likely to be reached.

That just settlements of apparently intractable problems can be reached with the help of the international community is amply demonstrated by recent events in southern Africa. In Namibia the United Nations mounted one of the most complex peace-keeping operations in its history and played a vital role in guaranteeing the impartiality of the elections and of the transition process. And in South Africa itself the Government has over the past few months at last begun to take steps towards negotiations with the representatives of the majority of South Africans and towards dismantling the repressive and brutal system of apartheid.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

The Australian Government warmly welcomes the statesmanship shown to date by President De Klerk, but urges the South African Government to move as soon as possible into substantive constitutional negotiations and to remove the remaining legislative cornerstones of the apartheid system. More does need to be done before those who have suffered under apartheid and those who support their struggle can be confident that developments in South Africa do constitute profound and irreversible change. We believe that sanctions imposed by the international community have played a central role in bringing about the important changes now under way, and that the sanctions pressure should not yet be reduced or lifted. But we hope the time will rapidly come when it can be.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

For Australia, the South Pacific is also an area of vital interest, and we continue to encourage processes of political development in the region. We are gratified in this respect by the continuing success of the Matignon and Oudinot Accords in creating a constructive and peaceful environment in New Caledonia for the working out of that country's political future. Equally, however, we continue to be deeply disappointed at the backward steps that occurred in Fiji with the events of 1987 and the recent promulgation of a Constitution which, while marking a welcome return to representative constitutional Government, none the less in the process builds new and far-reaching racially discriminatory principles into the Fijian political system.

Two countries in the Pacific which have been frustrated in fully developing a political identity of their own are the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, and Australia believes the United Nations has a constructive role to play in this respect. The full fruits of self-government which should have followed their legitimate acts of self-determination have been denied to them by legalistic approaches to the question of their political status. The continued application of the trusteeship régime to them not only belittles what they have already achieved in establishing independent political identities, but imposes practical disadvantages on them in their pursuit of national development.

If the coming era is to learn from the mistakes of the past, we need not only to find new co-operative ways of resolving regional problems - whether these be potentially global or much more limited in their consequences - but also to tackle with determination and stamina the most alarming global security problems of the cold war era - the upward spiral of arms procurement and the proliferation of increasingly more destructive weapons. That task is all the more important in our increasingly multipolar world. While the progress made by the United States and

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

the Soviet Union in their bilateral negotiations is evidence of super-Power commitment to a more peaceful world, it should also now be complemented by progress in multilateral disarmament negotiations.

We in Australia are proud of our commitment to the process of disarmament, and intend to redouble our efforts to capitalize on the current circumstances to achieve specific disarmament goals in the multilateral context, particularly in relation to chemical and nuclear weapons. Significant progress on the achievement of a chemical weapons convention has been made in the last year, but the need to conclude this convention is now greater than ever, and the opportunity to do so must be seized. Australia believes that a decisive step towards this goal would be a ministerial-level meeting of the Conference on Disarmament to be held as soon as possible.

We also continue to work assiduously to eliminate nuclear weapons. Australia is proud of its part, together with the other members of the South Pacific Forum, in the creation of the Treaty of Rarotonga, which has established a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific. We will not rest until a comprehensive test-ban treaty has been achieved with appropriate verification procedures. To help move towards that goal, Australia will be once more proposing, with New Zealand and other sponsors, a draft resolution on a comprehensive test ban this year and looks forward again to achieving strong support for it. We would wish this support to be carried over to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which is the appropriate forum for a comprehensive test ban to be negotiated. We are, therefore, pleased that the Conference on Disarmament has this year re-established an Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test ban, which will provide the opportunity for important preparatory work to a comprehensive test-ban treaty to be undertaken.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Australia was an active participant in Geneva at the recent Review Conference of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. Despite the Conference's regrettable inability to adopt a final declaration, we none the less consider it to have been a considerable success, reaching agreement, as it did, on a number of important issues, in particular the question of full-scope safeguards as a condition for nuclear supply. We will be working to build on the achievements of the Conference and to set the scene for a successful review and extension of the Treaty in 1995. The non-proliferation Treaty is an absolutely essential foundation on which the new relationships of the coming era must be built.

The acquisition of conventional weapons continues at an alarming rate in many parts of the globe. Often scarce resources are diverted from social and economic development to military expenditure. Australia supports measures by all States to reduce military budgets and to implement confidence-building measures which will reduce the risk of conflict.

The world community, while it is working together for a future of common security, has a second chance to show its equal determination to create a future of common prosperity. Meeting economic challenges is no less important than meeting security challenges if we are to provide guaranteed life and health for our children, and a fulfilling life for all our citizens.

Australia supports the efforts made by the United Nations in mobilizing international support for development efforts. The eighteenth special session of the General Assembly in April highlighted a new sense of commitment and renewed optimism for global economic co-operation. The globalization of economic problems has been accompanied by a growing awareness that their resolution can be achieved only by a sustained international partnership.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Australia is particularly concerned at the human cost of heavy national indebtedness, which severely compromises development efforts in many countries. Debtors and creditors need to address the issues raised by that indebtedness again in a spirit of international economic co-operation and in a way that addresses not only the immediate but in addition the long-term problems of the nation in question. Debt-reduction packages should be implemented in such a way as to enhance credit-worthiness and new money flows, and to support reform programmes in heavily indebted countries.

Australia firmly believes that, whatever may be the contribution of debt reduction and development co-operation programmes, the expansion of global trade is central to economic growth and development.

The Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is fundamentally about creating a more secure, stable and open international economic environment. GATT provides a framework of rights and obligations within which economic ambition can be channelled to the benefit of all countries, and not just the few most powerful. That is why the success of the Uruguay Round is so important. Between now and the final ministerial meeting in Brussels in December, all participants in the negotiations will have to intensify their efforts, and develop more of a spirit of compromise than has so far been evident, if a successful outcome is to be achieved. Nobody should be in any doubt that failure of the Uruguay Round would be disastrous for the world trading economy, for all the developing nations dependent on selling their commodities in the international marketplace and, indeed, for all the people we represent.

In addition to the abiding issues of security and economic development, there is a "third agenda" of problems now being given much increased prominence in

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

international relations - problems that are either too big for each country to solve individually or which are of a character that global action or global pressure can very much help to solve. In areas such as threats to the global environment, health problems like AIDS, the illicit narcotics trade and the problem of refugees and displaced persons, global interdependence is an omnipresent reality, and multilateral diplomacy an indispensable necessity. The era which we are entering is marked by the multiplication of such problems, and the quality of life of the people we represent will be very much determined by our ability to solve them.

The global environment is certainly one of the key international issues of the 1990s. We are working towards the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development which should deal with these two issues in an integrated way. The Conference will not succeed, however, unless considerably more effort is put into reconciling the conflicts between environmental and economic development policies. The two are not inconsistent: the goal of sustainable development can be achieved. But if the United Nations is to lead international efforts in this sphere, we must stop discussing the processes and start debating the substance. For the United Nations to make the most constructive input into solving these problems, there has to be greater co-ordination between the United Nations environment agencies, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations development agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). There is no obvious need for more agencies and institutions to deal with these issues; we do need to strengthen our existing institutions and to improve communications and co-ordination between them.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

Australia is a strong supporter of the Antarctic Treaty System, which reflects the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and has brought peace, stability and remarkable international co-operation to a very special region of the globe. Moves are now under way, with strong support from Australia, for the establishment within the Antarctic Treaty System of a far-sighted comprehensive environmental protection régime, one aspect of which would, it is hoped, be a permanent ban on mining and oil drilling within the region, to guarantee once and for all the permanence of its uniquely fragile and irreplacable environment. I would urge those countries not currently involved in these discussions but interested in promoting environmental protection in Antarctica to join the Antarctic Treaty, for it is only through that framework that an effective régime can and will be put in place.

Two other issues directly and immediately affecting the lives of individual citizens also particularly require concerted international action. The 1990s have been declared the Decade against Drug Abuse. Australia will continue to strive - in multilateral forums, with bilateral assistance, and by domestic action - to reverse the growth of this menace. In the global struggle against the AIDS pandemic, Australia has supported the central co-ordinating role of the World Health Organization and is providing financial assistance to its Global Plan on AIDS for the development of national AIDS programmes, particularly in South-East Asia, and the Pacific and Indian Ocean island countries.

Human rights issues generally remain very much part of the new international agenda. The most important factor in establishing human rights in this new era will be the spread of democracy to those parts of the world where democratic

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freedoms are still unknown. The growth of democracy in Eastern Europe has already seen an encouraging reduction in East-West confrontation in the international human rights arena. We have welcomed, in particular, a new spirit of co-operation that has become evident in the Commission on Human Rights.

Unfortunately, the record in human rights in all too many parts of the world has not been all positive over the past year. Australia is appalled at the treatment of innocent civilians caught up in the Gulf crisis, and condemns in the strongest terms restrictions imposed by the Government of Iraq on the freedom of movement of hostages held in that country and in Kuwait. Closer to home, Australia is also concerned with continuing restrictions on democratic and individual freedoms in both China and Myanmar, and we appeal to all involved in the situation in Sri Lanka to end the cycle of violence which is destroying the fabric of society in that nation. We frankly acknowledge that Australia's own past is not without blemish in regard to human rights, in particular concerning the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. However, we have progressed along the path of rectifying those injustices. We welcome international scrutiny of our efforts and are prepared to engage in dialogue with any interested country at any time on such issues. We take the view that the question of conformity to international human rights standards is not each country's own internal business, but the world's business.

I said at the outset that, as we move beyond the post-war era, the world has been given a second chance. This body, the United Nations, has also been given a second chance, and we, its Members, have to ensure that it is capable of grasping this opportunity. In many ways, the founders of the United Nations were far-sighted and built structures that will now stand us in good stead. In other

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

respects, it is clear that they could not have foreseen the circumstances of this new era and we should not shy away from change, from the discarding of long-established conventions and procedures and from the creation of new structures and new ways of doing things which better suit the new times. Our guiding criterion should be that we wish the United Nations to be effective and to influence events, rather than to be passively shaped and overwhelmed by them.

One area in which demands on the United Nations are obviously likely to grow in the new era is in the performance of conflict resolution and peace-keeping functions. Indeed, already over the past two years, five peace-keeping operations have been established and several others foreshadowed, including, of course, the comprehensive efforts that will be required in Cambodia. The peace-keeping function is still hampered by political, legal, financial and administrative problems. Australia advocates the need for greater efficiency and economy in peace-keeping and for the whole peace-keeping area of United Nations activity to be put on a firmer financial and administrative footing. I welcome the steps the Secretary-General has recently taken to improve co-ordination and financing of peace-keeping but note that much more still needs to be done.

There is an urgent need to improve the ability of the United Nations, not only to service the demands of its Members in regard to peace-keeping and peace-making, but also to deal with the major new issues of global interdependence, of which I spoke earlier. These major issues must be taken up more substantively and effectively than they are currently in the many different intergovernmental forums of the United Nations's economic and social sector, and this sector needs to be drastically restructured if we are to see the same revival in the economic aspects of the United Nations's role that we have seen on political issues. Equally, there

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

must be better central co-ordination and clearer common purpose among the various agencies and bodies of the United Nations, if each is to play its proper role in attacking multisectoral problems that can be resolved only if they act together.

As far as the Organization as a whole is concerned, universal membership should remain our central principle. In this connection, Australia regards as a relic of the past era the continued absence of the two Koreas from the ranks of United Nations membership. The Republic of Korea has stated its desire to become a full Member and we support admission of both Korean States either simultaneously or separately.

The resolutions of this organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly, embody the views of the broad membership of the Organization. We need to make better use of these annual sessions of our general membership. Let us not be reluctant to remove from our agenda many items that are there by custom, and get rid of many time-wasting, if time-honoured, procedures. Let us use this Assembly to set the norms and standards of correct international behaviour in this new era.

The Security Council is showing us how well it can work. At the same time, we have to acknowledge that the world has changed since 1945 and that there will be increasing and legitimate pressure to ensure that the membership of the Council better accords with today's realities. In any consideration of restructuring, our principal concern must be for the effectiveness of the Council and we need to be certain that what we do enhances, and does not risk undermining, the efficiency with which the Security Council is currently able to undertake its central role in international peace and security.

The Secretariat, which itself has in the past been the victim of cold war pressure, requires re-examination to ensure that its structures and its methods of

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recruiting its top people, both men and women, are best suited to the needs of the Organization in the new era, when the demands upon them will grow ever more immense.

Two years ago, when I first addressed the United Nations as Foreign Minister of Australia, I drew inspiration from the Charter and from the important role my great Australian Labour predecessor, Mr. Herbert Vere Evatt, played in the founding of the United Nations. I continue to carry in my mind his vision as to what this institution he helped create should achieve - peace, justice and decent standards of living for all the peoples of the world.

The nations of the world are now entering a new era of co-operation; we are breaking new ground as we at last accept in full our international responsibility to meet aggression and to resolve regional disputes. And in doing this we have recommitted ourselves and our countries to pursue peace and to end human suffering - not in an ad hoc, almost accidental manner, but as part of a growing international determination that we can make no excuses to our constituents, or to our children, if these goals of peace and development cannot be achieved.

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

This Organization at last holds out to its Members the promise its founders envisaged. But that promise will not be self-fulfilling. There is a historic obligation on us, the Members of the United Nations, to take up at this time and build on the new spirit of international co-operation, to bend our efforts to bolster the new multilateral framework for global peace and security, to act vigorously on the economic challenges before us, and to tackle co-operatively all the social, environmental and health issues which demand global remedies. We have another opportunity to put it right, and this time that opportunity must not be lost.

Mr. KATOPOLA (Malawi): On behalf of the Malawi delegation, I have much pleasure in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to preside over this forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Your qualifications and wide experience in international affairs have already been well stated by others who have preceded us. We are confident, therefore, that under your leadership and guidance the Assembly will achieve positive results in its work. In wishing you success, I also assure you of the Malawi delegation's utmost co-operation as you carry out the enormous tasks and responsibilities entrusted to you.

My delegation equally congratulates your predecessor, Mr. Joseph N. Garba of Nigeria. The past 12 months presented the General Assembly with a very busy schedule, which, apart from the many resumed sittings of the forty-fourth regular session itself, also included three very important special sessions. Mr. Garba presided over the work of all those sessions with efficiency and effectiveness. As we congratulate him on a job well done, we also wish him all the very best for the future.

On behalf of the Malawi delegation, I am happy to applaud our esteemed Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his steady stewardship of our

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Organization as it has continued its work of promoting international peace and security, understanding and co-operation. We also pay tribute to all his staff for their outstanding dedication to duty, at times even in the face of extremely difficult personal and professional circumstances. We hope that they can find satisfaction, pride and renewal in seeing their assignments, particularly the difficult ones, come to a successful and beneficial conclusion. We note that one such was the year-long assignment undertaken between April 1989 and March 1990 by the men and women who comprised the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), which helped Namibia through the final and most difficult process of transformation from an illegally controlled colony to a proud new sovereign State.

Before going any further, I should like, on behalf of the people and Government of Malawi, warmly to welcome Liechtenstein, the newest Member of our Organization. As already noted by others, Liechtenstein's admission moves us a step closer to full realization of the universality of the United Nations.

My delegation notes from the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly that until the advent of the grave developments in the Persian Gulf on 2 August, the international situation had been characterized by general peace and tranquillity. Significantly, in certain regions where strife and conflict had hitherto come to be almost regarded as the norm peace and calm had returned at last.

We note with interest also some of the other momentous and historic developments that have occurred during this period. In Africa, for instance, the last chapter of European colonialism finally closed. Meanwhile, in Eastern Europe we witnessed the once formidable Iron Curtain brought crashing down as the order which had been established behind it after the Second World War was swept away in a political earthquake whose aftershock continues to be felt in far-away places.

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However, my delegation has further observed that, although there has been considerable positive development in the political sphere, matters have not been quite the same in other areas. Thus, for instance, despite the apparently wide focus given to economic problems, especially those affecting developing countries, very limited concrete achievements can be identified. Ironically, some of the very developments in the political sphere that have rightly been welcomed have themselves appeared further to compound some of the existing economic problems.*

In view of the many issues and problems, some new and some perennial, set out by the Secretary-General in his report, and reflected in the Assembly's agenda, it is the sincere hope of the Malawi delegation that this session will strive for practical results.

We in Malawi are most encouraged by the further positive progress that has been achieved in eliminating or reducing the areas of tension around the world and has thus increased the prospects of wider international peace and stability.

In this connection, we note with pleasure, for instance, that, following the successful start in the implementation of the Arias Plan, adopted in 1987 as a means for bringing about an end to the regional conflicts in Central America, peace has been returned to that area. We have no doubt that the Plan will be successfully implemented in all the affected parts of the region.

The ending of years of war will not result overnight in the elimination of all the problems that confront the countries concerned. However, peace will make it possible for them to harness more of their national energies and resources, both human and material, towards social and economic development.

We have followed with keen interest developments in the Far East, and have been encouraged by the continuing dialogue between North and South Korea on ways

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* Mr. Flores Bermudez (Honduras), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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to reunite their divided motherland. We have been particularly encouraged that for the first time there has been direct contact at the high level of Prime Ministers. We in Malawi support and encourage these endeavours, which can only contribute towards a positive outcome.

As regards the Cambodian question, we are greatly encouraged by the considerable progress that has been achieved under the aegis of the five permanent members of the Security Council in the search for a viable solution. We welcome the establishment of the Supreme National Council. Needless to say, developments have now reached a critical and delicate stage. We would therefore urge all those with central roles to play to avoid precipitate decisions and actions that might jeopardize further progress.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

My Government has taken note of the Secretary-General's continued efforts in the quest for a solution to the question of Cyprus. We have similarly followed his efforts to implement agreements already reached on the problems of Afghanistan and Western Sahara. Permit me to reiterate Malawi's support for all these dialogues and endeavours.

Since last October a major political revolution has swept through Eastern Europe. As a result, the Socialist order established in the region after the Second World War has for the most part been replaced by a new one based on the respective peoples' democratic aspirations. Malawi hopes that the peoples of Eastern Europe will be able finally to achieve the political, social and economic objectives to which they aspire.

Among the major results of the Eastern European revolution has been to facilitate the reunification of the two Germanys, which takes effect in a few hours. I take this opportunity, on behalf of the people of Malawi, to congratulate the German people as they become a single nation again. We wish them well for the future. My delegation expresses Malawi's belief that a reunified Germany will be a positive force in promoting international unity, understanding and co-operation.

It is particularly comforting to be able for once to talk about our own region, southern Africa, with some justified optimism. In this connection perhaps the most important development in the region has been the accession of Namibia to independence on 21 March of this year. I would therefore, on behalf of the Malawi delegation and the Malawi Government, extend once again to the Government and the people of Namibia our warm congratulations.

However, not all the political problems that have hitherto confronted southern Africa have now been solved. For, with the exception of the question of Namibia, most of the issues on the southern Africa agenda remain unresolved. The

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insurgencies in Angola and Mozambique continue unabated, while apartheid with all its adverse implications remains in place in the Republic of South Africa.

With regard to Angola, we regret the apparent failure of the much-heralded agreement reached at Gbadolite, Zaire, in June 1989, to bring about a settlement of the 14-year-old insurgency carried out against the Government of that country by the bandits of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Indeed, we are concerned at the apparent escalation and widening of hostilities between the forces of the two sides in recent times. In the circumstances, therefore, we are encouraged by the recent reaffirmation by the Government of Angola of its commitment to seeking a peaceful solution. We in Malawi support the Angolan Government's efforts and we appeal to those external forces that would seek to fish in the perceived muddy waters in Angola to weigh carefully the grave consequences of their actions, not only for Angola and the Angolan people but for the whole southern African region.

When he addressed the Assembly in October last year the leader of the Malawi delegation applauded what he described as the courageous step taken by the leader of Mozambique, His Excellency President Joaquim Chissano, in inviting the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) to enter unconditionally into negotiations with his Government so as to bring about an end to the conflict that has ravaged that country during the past 16 years.

We note that since then the Mozambique Government has pursued every avenue towards establishing a dialogue with RENAMO. We in Malawi were therefore pleased to learn recently that following the direct contacts by representatives of the two sides they had agreed to hold further meetings. And we have been even more pleased and encouraged to hear that the Central Committee of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) decided last July to open up the political process in the country to all, so that even RENAMO would be free to participate in national life. My

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Government believes that this FRELIMO decision and the other policies introduced by the Mozambique Government during the past two years have already met most, if not all, of the conditions previously demanded by RENAMO before it could end its insurgency. We therefore hope very sincerely that RENAMO will seize this opportunity to demonstrate its patriotism and that, together with the Government, it will help to heal the national wounds and create in Mozambique the necessary conditions whereby all Mozambicans can work together for the social and economic development of their beautiful country.

Following the changes in Namibia, we have welcomed developments in the Republic of South Africa. We have been encouraged by the practical signs of the South African Government's apparent determination to fulfil its undertaking to end the present universally condemned system of apartheid, as manifested by, among other things, the unbanning of political groups and the release of political prisoners, especially Mr. Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the African National Congress (ANC). We very much welcome the release of Mr. Mandela.

None of these measures taken thus far by the South African Government can in any way be construed of themselves as constituting the dismantling of apartheid. Indeed, it could well be said that they do not meet the conditions set by the international community, including the General Assembly, for the relaxation of pressure on South Africa and for its readmission as a bona fide member of the community of nations. Nevertheless, it is our view that the steps taken thus far, limited though some of them may be, constitute significant progress. We believe that the initiation, at last, of the dialogue now taking place between the South African Government and the leaders of the ANC was in large part facilitated by these very measures. Meanwhile, the dialogue itself has already contributed towards creating the conditions in which the process of realizing all the

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political, social and economic goals set by the majority in that country and supported by the international community could begin.

In our view the issue ought not to be whether there should be rewards to one side or to the other for actions and measures taken towards bringing about this positive change in South Africa. Rather, we believe that it is more important - and it would certainly be more helpful - for the international community to acknowledge these positive developments and encourage further steps so as to help accelerate the solution of that country's political problems. In that way, we believe, will real progress be achieved. For, as the saying goes, even a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.

My Government supports the dialogue now going on in South Africa and we are encouraged by the progress achieved so far. We are therefore greatly concerned about the likely adverse effect that certain recent developments, especially the escalation in factional violence, could have on the future of the process now set in train towards the holding of constitutional negotiations.

Meanwhile, my delegation wishes to express Malawi's pleasure at the dramatic change in the atmosphere that has taken place in southern Africa since South Africa embarked on the path to peaceful change. For the first time in decades the subregion has enjoyed relative peace and tranquillity. We welcome this and look forward to the restoration of permanent peace and security in the subregion. This would enable all States in southern Africa to direct all their energies and national resources towards the social and economic development of their respective peoples.

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I wish to express my delegation's extreme concern over the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East. In the past 12 months we have witnessed an apparent abandonment of the search for a peaceful solution to the Palestinian question. We have also seen hopes for a return to peace in the Persian Gulf dashed as that area has been plunged into a fresh conflict with serious implications for international peace and security, on the one hand, and for international economic stability and development, on the other.

With regard to the Palestinian question, Malawi deeply regrets the termination of the dialogue between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We also regret the abandonment by the Israeli Government of its own widely supported plan for initiating a political dialogue between itself and the Palestinians in the occupied territories as a prelude to constitutional negotiations. In our view that return to the status quo ante of "no war, no peace" is not the way to make progress. It will only make the search for a peaceful solution even more difficult. Indeed, we have already noted with dismay the resurgence of wanton violence since the cessation of all dialogue.

We therefore wish to call upon all the parties to the Palestinian question to reconsider their positions and to give peace another chance. Peace can be achieved through the resumption of dialogue, either bilaterally or multilaterally, in the context of an international conference in which all the parties would participate equally and without preconditions.

As for the situation in the Persian Gulf, my Government deeply regrets the invasion of Kuwait and the forcible removal of its Government. Malawi opposes as a matter of principle the use or threat of use of force by one State against another. We oppose even more strongly the menacing of a smaller State by a bigger one, as in the present instance, for the purpose of compelling the smaller State to

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bow to the latter's will. Such actions threaten international peace and security and must not be condoned.

In our view, Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait, apart from threatening peace and security in the Persian Gulf and in the Middle East in general, also pose, through their adverse effects on fossil-oil prices, a threat to international economic stability and development, especially for developing countries.

Accordingly, Malawi supports the role played by the United Nations, through the Security Council, and also supports the regional efforts by Arab States in seeking to resolve this crisis through an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Despite the continued existence of areas of conflict and tension, we remain confident that, given the growing co-operation between the super-Powers, the prospects for wider international peace and security are better now than ever before. Thus, the co-ordinated response and subsequent joint initiatives taken by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics over the Kuwait crisis are a hopeful portent for future global security.

In the mean time we have seen how, as a result of increased bilateral United States-USSR understanding and co-operation, East-West tension has virtually disappeared. Indeed, earlier this year the cold war, which had shaped international relations since the Second World War, was declared to be over. We note that since then the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the countries of the Warsaw Pact have embarked upon a search for ways in which the two former rival organizations can now forge co-operation between them.

In view of those circumstances, it is Malawi's hope that we shall at least see more positive progress in other areas of security, particularly in arms reduction and disarmament. We thus welcome the Secretary-General's report, which indicates

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that there has been some progress in some of the work of the Disarmament Commission. We further note that progress has also been achieved in bilateral negotiations on arms reduction between the United States and the Soviet Union. In this context, I should like to express Malawi's satisfaction at the agreements reached earlier this year which make possible the start of mutual reductions in NATO and Warsaw Pact armed forces stationed in Europe. We consider that to be a major achievement.

Meanwhile we have paid attention to the outcome of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held at Geneva last month, and we look forward to the Amending Conference on the partial test-ban Treaty. We believe that the time is now right for that Treaty to be expanded into a complete and comprehensive one. At a time when the world is said to have gone beyond the cold war and is instead embracing understanding and co-operation, we can see no further need for the testing, let alone production, of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. We therefore hope that the Amending Conference to be held in January 1991 will be able to take the correct decision on this question.

Malawi hopes that with both disarmament among the major Powers and arms reduction among the other countries now becoming a reality, it will be possible to examine again, with a view to possible implementation, the recommendations contained in the Final Document prepared for the special session on disarmament held at New York in 1988, which the Assembly failed to adopt. Notwithstanding the argument then adduced against assuming the existence of an automatic correlation between disarmament and development, we are inclined to believe that the now widely touted idea of a peace dividend does in fact confirm the validity of such an assumption.

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Therefore we would also urge the weapon-possessing States, as they begin to look seriously to disarmament and examine alternative areas for the redeployment of the resources previously spent on the armed forces and armaments industries, to consider that it could be equally to their economic advantage if the alternative industries could help promote economic development in developing countries. We believe that that proposal is worth serious consideration.

My Government has been encouraged by the apparent increased attention paid during the past 12 months to international economic co-operation and especially to how to address the problems of the developing countries. We note that, in addition to being part of the agenda of the yearly summit meetings of the industrialized countries, the problems of developing countries have also been the subject of at least two United Nations-sponsored meetings, namely, the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, held in April, and the second United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, held last month.

With regard to the eighteenth special session, however, we, as a least developed country, were rather disappointed that the session chose not to consider the problems confronting such countries. Even though those were already scheduled to be considered later at a Conference especially devoted to the problems of least developed countries, we believe that it would have been most appropriate and beneficial to have had them examined in a more global context as well, so that their solutions could also be part of a comprehensive plan of action. For, although unique in some ways, the problems of the least developed countries are no different from those of other countries. They stem from the same root and have the same consequences, only in a more concerted form.

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My Government was, of course, pleased that the special session was able to accept some of the proposals long advanced by the developing countries as means to resolving their economic plight. Among these was the need to make loans from international financial institutions, for example, the World Bank, amenable to rescheduling; another was the need to recognize that the development of social infrastructures, such as hospitals and schools, is equally essential to national economic development and therefore eligible for financing with loans granted at concessionary rates.

However, we were disappointed that the developed countries once again resisted proposals aimed at addressing directly the debt crisis, the existing trade imbalances and barriers, low commodity prices and the need for substantial transfers of technology to developing countries. Instead, they insisted again on prescribing formulas that have already proved either inappropriate or ineffective, while at the same time introducing new conditions for granting aid. In our view, some of these conditions would seem to encourage and justify interference in a recipient country's internal affairs. Unfortunately, these conditions have since also received endorsement at other meetings of developed donor countries.

Malawi supports the growing international concern about seeking solutions to the various social problems confronting the international community. We especially applaud the leading role that the United Nations has taken on several of these, for example in the fight against the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic and the scourge of international drug trafficking, as well as in promoting the welfare of children. As regards the latter, we have just seen for ourselves the UNICEF-sponsored World Summit for Children, held here last weekend which is said to have been attended by the largest gathering of Heads of State in history.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

Regrettably, the countries most affected by these problems are those whose need to survive economically often leads them to ignore or otherwise accommodate the unacceptable situations which these problems create. We, therefore, regard as cynical and most unfortunate the suggestions made by some developed countries that the affected developing countries should bear greater responsibility for solving such problems as that of illicit narcotic drug production and trafficking. We would suggest, instead, that if the developed countries did more to facilitate more rapid development in the developing countries, the present problems might not exist at all, or they would have been easier either to eliminate or to contain.

It is for these and other reasons that Malawi would appeal for a more objective and pragmatic consideration of how best to promote meaningful and mutually beneficial North-South co-operation. The North has to help bring about a more rapid developed South. We remain convinced that an economically stable and healthy South is in the economic interest of the North; the world cannot achieve real security and stability as long as a large section of it remains economically, socially and politically unstable and insecure.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government of Malawi, its appreciation for the assistance which it has continued to receive from the international donor community, especially from the United Nations and its various agencies. This has enabled it to deal with some of the consequences of the political insecurity and instability confronting our subregion. There are signs at last which would suggest that the causes of the existing situation could finally be eliminated. Until then, we shall continue to need external assistance in coping with those problems, such as the influx of refugees, whose number increases every day.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

We are also grateful to the United Nations, as well as to other donors, for their continued support for our national development effort. We value this assistance very much.

In closing, allow me to wish the Assembly success in its deliberations. The delegation of Malawi looks forward to making its own modest contribution to this goal.

Mr. TRAORE (Guinea) (interpretation from French): Once again, I have the pleasure of addressing this distinguished Assembly to transmit to it the heartfelt and warm greetings of the people and the Government of the Republic of Guinea, as well as those of its President, General Lansana Conté.

I should like, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, on your brilliant election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this session and, at the same time, to express my conviction that your human qualities, competence and outstanding diplomatic experience, will surely make our work completely successful. For that reason, I can assure you of my delegation's complete co-operation in the accomplishment of the delicate and very important task unanimously entrusted to him.

I also pay tribute to his predecessor, the distinguished representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mr. Joseph Nanven Garba, for the effectiveness and perseverance with which he conducted the work of the forty-fourth session and of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth special sessions of the General Assembly.

Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of our Organization, has, during the past few years, exerted tireless efforts which have given our Organization greater credibility and prestige. Such devotion to the service of peace and progress, inspired by eminent human qualities, deserves our heartfelt and warm congratulations.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

I take this opportunity to welcome the admission of Liechtenstein as a new Member of the United Nations.

Since our last session, the world has changed radically. This momentous process, which has taken place in the space of one year, will undoubtedly continue.

A few years ago, the bipolarity in East-West relations had already begun to wane because, thanks to our efforts at reflection and concerted action, intransigent ideological positions had gradually yielded to co-operation.

Today the major upheavals occurring throughout the world are revealing a new trend, the pressure for democracy, which brings a new reality to the struggle for the creation of a new and fair international order based on the interdependence of nations.

In this new international context, the search for solutions to the major challenges before us will be inspired by the need to continue the dialogue which was begun three years ago in order to enhance international relations, to control events that are taking place at too fast a pace and to look to the future with assurance and a spirit of solidarity.

In the course of the past year, three main facts have characterized the international situation. First, the unswerving will of States to resolve conflicts has been in evidence and is growing stronger. Secondly, constructive dialogue between North and South, made possible by the adoption of the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation opens new prospects for more effective structures of international economic co-operation. Thirdly, the crisis created in the Persian Gulf, following the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, constitutes the discordant note in the maintenance of peace and respect for international law.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

While most of the events that have been upsetting our world are, fortunately, on their way to resolution, it none the less remains true that the complete elimination of all the existing hotbeds of crisis requires more comprehension and sacrifice.

On the African continent, the successful implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) led to the independence of Namibia, which we joyfully admitted to our Organization last April as a new Member. That historic event shows how well-founded multilateral action is, and attests to a people's determination to break the yoke of foreign domination. If that young State is to be rebuilt, it will need sizeable resources, which the international community must provide.

In South Africa, recent positive developments enable us to look to the future with optimism. In fact, the release on 11 February 1990 of Nelson Mandela, the symbol of the anti-apartheid struggle; the beginning of a dialogue between the leaders of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Pretoria Government; and the recent opening up of Mr. De Klerk's Party to people of colour are all encouraging signs in the anti-apartheid struggle.

None the less, these qualitative changes that have taken place in South Africa should make us even more vigilant, because if we are not careful the peace initiative designed to create a democratic, multi-racial South Africa could be jeopardized by violent delaying tactics on the part of forces opposed to the eradication of apartheid. While we await the completion of the negotiation process now under way, my delegation is convinced of the effectiveness of comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa in overcoming the intransigence of the advocates of the anachronistic system of apartheid.

On the question of Western Sahara, the Republic of Guinea appreciates the mediation of the Secretary-General, whose activities in connection with this case

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have led to significant and hopeful developments. The implementation of Security Council resolution 621 (1988), authorizing the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative for the Western Sahara, justifies our conviction in this respect.

It is comforting to note, furthermore, that the winds of peace are now blowing over other areas of conflict in Africa, where reconciliation seems to be the leit motiv of all actions under way, be they in Angola, Mozambique or the Horn of Africa.

The same peace process is awaited in the conflict between Chad and Libya, which have decided to bring their dispute before the International Court of Justice.

In connection with the Comorian Island of Mayotte, we have every reason to hope that the initiatives undertaken by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations will rapidly lead to a negotiated solution acceptable to the two parties.

The situation in the Middle East and the Palestinian problem have already been the subject of many resolutions in which we have repeatedly condemned the usurpation of occupied Arab lands, as well as the suffering caused by the tragedy of a Lebanon in flames. We have recognized that an international conference remains the framework and the option most certain to extinguish those flames.

We express our firm support for the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause. None the less, while the proclamation of the independent State of Palestine and the peace initiatives by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had seemed to be a glimmer of hope on the horizon, the sky of negotiation now seems to be darkened by clouds.

Indeed, the systematic settlement of Soviet Jews in the occupied Arab territories, the obstinacy of the extremist wing of the Israeli Government, and the present break in the dialogue between the PLO and the United States are matters of

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concern to my Government. My delegation, while agreeing that Israel must exist as a sovereign State, also recognizes the new independent State of Palestine, whose right to territory and to sovereignty must be preserved.

While the international community welcomes the fortunate outcome of the Iran-Iraq conflict, illustrated very recently by the spectacular withdrawal of Iraqi troops and the exchange of prisoners, it is none the less highly concerned over the explosive situation created in the Gulf region by the invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq. That annexation violates the provisions of the Charter. My country therefore supports all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on this question and demands the unconditional withdrawal of the Iraqi armed forces from Kuwait to the internationally recognized borders, and the return to power of the legitimate Government of the Emirate.

The situation in Asia, in general terms, is also highly disquieting and entails further threats to international peace and security.

The cessation of hostilities and the initiation of a dialogue between Afghans, in accordance with the Geneva Agreements, will facilitate the repatriation of all Afghans and their social reintegration into a united and prosperous nation.

In respect of Cambodia, any approach to the question should entail an overall political settlement that can bring that country a just and lasting peace. To that end, my Government supports the measures for stability taken by the five permanent members of the Security Council in the framework of the quest for a solution involving the various parties, without foreign interference. My delegation supports the Plan of the Five dated 31 August 1990, and especially the establishment of a Supreme National Council presided over by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

In the courageous legitimate struggle being waged by the Korean people, North and South should continue the dialogue that has now begun, in order to achieve the peaceful reunification of their homeland through the creation of a single, confederal State which will be a Member of the United Nations.

Cyprus is also trying to bring its two communities together. The United Nations, through its Secretary-General, is making efforts in that direction. But the situation remains unchanged.

My delegation has been following closely the democratic developments that have taken place in most of the countries of Central America - a region which has been the victim of such tragic upheavals. Bringing peace to Nicaragua has certainly given an impetus to efforts to relieve tension and achieve national reconciliation and development without foreign interference.

The future of the Malvinas Islands must be forged by peaceful means, on the basis of negotiations between the parties with strict respect for the Charter.

With the disquieting persistence of certain hotbeds of tension, general and complete disarmament under effective international control remains a categorical imperative. The feeling that peace has finally been achieved is sometimes dispelled by an atmosphere of distrust or overt hostility here and there.

It is true that significant progress has been achieved in negotiations between the two super-Powers. Despite advances towards the conclusion of a convention on chemical and biological weapons, we find the multilateral talks proceeding rather slowly. The well-established triangular relationship between disarmament, development and security remains very timely in a period of acute crisis and deprivation when material and financial resources must be mobilized and directed towards development.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

As I have often stressed from this rostrum, development must be the collective endeavour of mankind - in other words, the shared responsibility of States. Faced with the frightful threat of a nuclear holocaust, political leaders, scientists, religious authorities and non-governmental organizations should all share in the building of peace and international security.

My country abhors war, regardless of its cause. In this respect I should like to share with those present here the wisdom of a famous French cabaret singer who believes that "nothing is more beautiful than a rusty rifle".

In the real contemporary world - above all during the last decade - economics have an impact on politics. The enormous changes that have taken place in East-West relations and the democratic awakening of peoples have created conditions conducive to the establishment of more harmonious international economic and social relations. The developing countries, which must draw the appropriate lessons from the impact of these changes and benefit from their consequences, are somewhat optimistic because of the adoption at the eighteenth special session, last April, of the Declaration on the economic growth and development of the third-world countries.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

That consensus proved again that with a measure of real political will the nations of the world can engage in sincere and constructive dialogue. Such dialogue is all the more necessary since various development decades have failed, since the North-South dialogue needs to be given new vigour, since a new international development strategy for the period 1991 to 2000 needs to be formulated, and since the third world in general and Africa in particular are suffering greatly from the world economic crisis, whose consequences are compounded by natural disasters and underdevelopment.

On the subject of those countries, the poor countries should, without disregarding co-operation with the industrialized countries, promote South-South co-operation as an adjunct to North-South co-operation and as a special tool for ensuring collective self-reliance and self-sufficiency in food. In that context, the Cyprus initiative and the Cairo political declaration on eliminating hunger throughout the world can be useful in guiding our various development activities.

The development crisis, which has been particularly harsh on the least developed countries, is the result of well-known internal and external causes. The recent Paris Conference highlighted these. The attainment of a new international economic order remains vital.

Debt continues to weigh heavily on the development activities of the poorest countries. In that connection, while we appreciate certain instances of debt rescheduling agreed to by friendly countries, we consider that assistance to poor countries must be based on the following principles: reduction and even elimination of interest; extension of the repayment period, taking into account each country's capacity to pay; refinancing loans made under market conditions by multilateral organizations; and increased official development assistance to the least developed countries. The magnitude of the crisis is such that creditors should be more sensitive to the disturbing situation debtor countries.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

I wish now to address problems of the environment. There is no doubt that there is a symbiotic relationship between those problems and development. For the Republic of Guinea, the question of the environment should not be viewed solely from the standpoint of efforts to remedy the harmful consequences of human activity for the ecosystem. It has another dimension: implementation of a policy for organizing production without causing irreparable damage to nature and for foreseeing natural disasters that can disturb the ecological balance and jeopardize development. For example, ongoing collective measures should be devised with respect to drought, desertification, acid rain, deforestation, earthquakes and flooding.

The transboundary movement and dumping of wastes are a dangerous scourge that calls for a vigorous reaction from the international community. I cannot stress enough the need for further negotiations on a convention on this subject that can be ratified unanimously by all States. In that connection, my delegation welcomes the organization of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992.

We also appreciate the decision taken at the last session, which mandated the Director-General of the United Nations Environment Programme, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, to make preparations for the speedy negotiation of a convention on climate.

An examination of the world social situation underscores the real development problems of the poor countries. Must we not find ways to reconcile the needs of structural adjustment with those of social stability? At this session the Assembly will place special emphasis on ways and means to overcome the dangerous social effects of structural adjustment programmes. Furthermore, in official development assistance, key sectors such as education and health suffer because of the priority

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

given to profit-generating activities. We therefore need a strategy adapted to national realities, to give a human face to structural adjustment.

It is also absolutely necessary to integrate women and young people into the development process in the third world. The rural exodus can be prevented only through a policy of supporting community projects.

The abuse of drugs and narcotic substances requires intensified international co-operation on concerted world action in the war against the production, sale and use of drugs. The effectiveness of our struggle against this scourge depends also on the eradication of the laundering of drug money.

My delegation welcomed the conclusions reached at the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Havana.

On the subject of human rights I wish to refer to the process of democratization now under way in my country. But first, I want to reaffirm the international community's obligation to promote a new humanitarian order, for our era displays an unprecedented interest in universal human values. That is why since 2 October 1989 the national authorities of the Republic of Guinea, in accordance with commitments made six years ago, have been developing a new basic law that will enshrine the state of law so much desired by the people of Guinea. That basic law, which is now on the drawing-board, demonstrates the commitment of the National Military Correcting Committee to democracy and to the values it espouses. The basic law includes a true charter of human rights, by which Guinea reaffirms its international conception of rights through adherence to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights. By virtue of its provisions, any Guinean will be able to count on the application of those texts, which will become an integral part of our Constitution.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

The lofty task of democratization has suddenly had to confront the tragic events in Liberia. Since December, that fraternal country has been plagued by bloody fratricidal confrontations that have done immeasurable harm to the social and economic life of countries bordering Liberia. The crisis in Liberia has caused total political destabilization exacerbated by serious differences among groups and movements, which has plunged the country into genocide and material destruction.

To restore national peace and harmony, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has, as members know, developed a peace plan involving the sending of a subregional buffer force charged with ensuring the unconditional observance of the cease-fire.

My delegation believes that a just and equitable solution of the conflict must involve the co-ordination of a national agreement including all players in the political game. My delegation invites the international community to support the efforts of ECOWAS permanent mediation committee to restore peace, democracy and national reconcilation in that fraternal country.

Guinea has on many occasions stated its position and its concerns on the conflict in Liberia. It has indicated, inter alia, that it is not a question of supporting one faction or one man against the others, but of creating the conditions for dialogue leading to reconciliation among all Liberians.

The conflict has had consequences for Guinea, including demographic disturbances resulting from the massive influx of more than 380,000 refugees. Such a sudden and great concentration of people results in considerable sacrifices for the local population and for the Government.

Despite substantial assistance from the international community through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the problems posed by the refugees are far from being solved, for the following reasons.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

First, thus far there has been only short-term assistance to refugees, and we see no happy outcome to that situation. To reach such an outcome, we must draw on the basic principle of the right of voluntary individual return for refugees. Secondly, the local people who have generously opened their doors and their food stocks are today even poorer than the refugees, as they have been hit with sudden rises in food prices. And thirdly, many disturbances have resulted from this huge migration both in economic and social structures and in the areas of health care and ecological balance, against the backdrop of disruption of the normal networks for production and trade in south-eastern Guinea.

(Mr. Traoré, Guinea)

My Government appeals urgently to the international community as a whole to consider not only emergency aid but also medium-term and long-term assistance to the refugees and to the populations that have welcomed them.

The qualitative improvement in the international climate following the important changes that have taken place in many countries enhances the constructive role of our Organization in the relaxation of regional conflicts and in the struggle for the building of a more prosperous world. In this complex network of change, the human being, his aspirations and his future must occupy pride of place.

Growing awareness of our interdependence confers on multilateralism new responsibilities and new prospects. It is within that interdependence that we may find the hidden key to our success and the very foundations of our future.

As we approach the end of the century, when peoples are breaking down ideological barriers and demolishing the bastions of arbitariness, under the thrust of democracy a new civilization based on co-operation and realism will emerge from the ruins of the old. The people of Guinea would give anything to see the birth of that new civilization which will bring new hope and certainty to our hearts and minds.

Mr. DINKA (Ethiopia): On behalf of the Ethiopian delegation and on my own behalf, I join those who have extended sincere congratulations to Mr. de Marco of Malta on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at the forty-fifth session.

In addition to expressing its sincere appreciation to Mr. Garba, who presided with great skill over the deliberations of the General Assembly at the forty-fourth session and the three special sessions, the Ethiopian delegation wishes also to

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welcome the admission of Liechtenstein as the newest Member of our Organization.

Heartfelt gratitude is also due to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who, ever since his election eight years ago, has with foresight and painstaking efforts rekindled the hopes and confidence of the international community in the United Nations.

This session of the General Assembly comes in the midst of historic developments on the world stage and, in a sense, forms a watershed between two different epochs in international relations. The era of the cold war, with all its attendant tensions and threats, is coming to a close, and a new world order, whose major features are not yet clearly evident, is gradually emerging. While this new order appears to be mainly characterized by greater international understanding and co-operation, we must guard against certain tendencies which could give rise to uncertainties.

The political implications and effects of recent events and trends have obviously given high hopes for a better system of international relations. We are already witnessing a rapprochement between the super-Powers and a certain reduction of international tension. Confrontation is giving way to accommodation and competition to co-operation. The prospects for the dissolution of the cold-war military and political structures also seem quite bright.

Europe, which epitomized the division of the world, is undergoing profound changes, ushering in an era of co-operation and possible integration. Indeed, we are today on the eve of the historic unification of Germany, an event on which we warmly congratulate the entire German nation.

In other regions of the world, too, we see nations pooling their energy and resources to form larger economic and political groupings. The reunification of

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the two Yemeni States, which we welcome heartily, and the emerging prospect for better understanding between the two Korean States are but a few instances of a growing trend, which must be encouraged and supported.

With regard to Korea, the international community must support the realization of the noble and long-cherished goal of the Korean people for peaceful reunification. The steps we take and the positions we adopt within the United Nations on this question must enhance and promote, and not vitiate, this process of reunification of Korea.

The perceptible improvement in the international scene, especially in the relations between the super-Powers, has also resulted in some modest advance on the question of disarmament. Despite this, however, the arms race is yet to be definitively halted and reversed and vital resources for human development and progress released. The international community, therefore, must continue to give this issue priority attention and must further strengthen its efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The current atmosphere of better understanding and greater co-operation is also contributing towards the resolution of the many regional conflicts that have been endangering peace and stability in many parts of the world. The first and so far best example of international co-operation in the resolution of conflicts in the recent past is the long and fruitful process of negotiation that resulted in the accession of Namibia to its long-awaited independence.

Namibia's independence and its admission as a full-fledged Member of the United Nations is a source of immense gratification and pride to all of us, especially to the Namibian people, which has for so long waged a heroic and

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difficult struggle. The United Nations too must be proud of the unprecedented role it played in Namibia's peaceful transition to independence.

The overall positive changes in international relations coupled with Namibia's independence also seem to be having some impact on the situation in South Africa. We all acknowledge that, as a result of measures taken within South Africa, hopes for a peaceful and early demise of apartheid are rising. However, the conditions for the commencement of substantial negotiations, set out in the Harare Declaration of the Organization of African Unity and the Declaration of the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly, are yet to be completely fulfilled. More importantly, the main pillars of the racist system are still intact, and the régime itself has not declared a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa as its ultimate goal.

In the circumstances, it would be very unwise, indeed counter-productive, to ease the pressure, both economic and political, against the Pretoria régime. Ethiopia, therefore, urges the maintenance of all the sanctions currently in effect against South Africa until the process of change reaches an irreversible stage.

As regards other regional conflicts, the easing of global tension and the rapprochement between the super-Powers have opened new avenues for the peaceful resolution of hitherto seemingly intractable problems. Of particular significance in this context are the situations in Central America and Cambodia.

In our own subregion, too, a process of peace and better understanding among the States of north-eastern Africa has recently been launched, in which my country has played a very active role. Inasmuch as the responsibility of finding peaceful solutions to regional conflicts and problems rests primarily with the Governments

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of the region concerned, the Heads of State and Government of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda have recently taken concrete measures that are of major significance for relations among their States.

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In their 9 July 1990 meeting in Addis Ababa, the Heads of State and Government of the six countries, after a thorough analysis of the prevailing situation in their sub-region, adopted the historic Declaration of Peace, Stability and Development.

In one of the most important provisions of that Declaration, the six Governments committed themselves to co-operate towards the peaceful resolution of internal conflicts prevailing in the sub-region by supporting each other's peace and reconciliation efforts. Furthermore, they reaffirmed their position that any peaceful resolution of internal conflicts in the sub-region shall invariably be sought within the framework of the national unity and territorial integrity of the affected State.

Following this important conference, and pursuant to the Addis Ababa Declaration, the Foreign Ministers of the six States met in Nairobi on 27 and 28 August 1990 and held useful discussions on the modalities for implementing the objectives contained in the Declaration. While this regional effort is still in its initial stages, the parties are, none the less, confident that it will enhance the prospects for peace, stability and development in the sub-region. Convinced that it is only through such dialogue and co-operation that lasting peace and stability can prevail in our countries, the Ethiopian Government and people are determined to extend full support to this regional initiative.

Cognizant also of the fact that peace in Ethiopia is closely related to peace in our sub-region and vice versa, and in line with the discernible international trend towards peaceful resolution of conflicts, the Government of Ethiopia will continue to pursue, unilaterally and through the regional forum to which I have just referred, as well as through other channels, its declared policy of resolving

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peacefully the internal conflicts in Ethiopia. My Government is confident that its declared policy of peace and the measures it has taken so far in this regard will enjoy the increased support of the international community.

The significant exception in this otherwise happy trend of resolving regional conflicts through peaceful dialogue is the situation in the Middle East. Complicated as it is now by the current situation in the Gulf, the Middle East crisis continues to pose a serious threat to regional peace and security. In this regard, my country will continue to support the realization of the legitimate aspirations of all the peoples in the region as well as the right of all the regional States to live within recognized and guaranteed borders. Ethiopia will also continue to encourage peaceful dialogue between all the parties concerned within the framework of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Notwithstanding all I have just said, we have no illusion that peace on Earth is about to become a pervasive reality. As we all realize, the threat of nuclear confrontation still hangs over humanity. Many conflicts, both internal and international, remain unresolved. As a result, the danger of small conflicts triggering off a major conflagration is still a distinct possibility.

The invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq seems to have justified our serious concern at the precarious nature of world peace, in spite of all the salutary events at the global level.

With regard to the Gulf crisis, Ethiopia has taken an unequivocal stand against aggression and for respect of the principles of the United Nations and, as a member of the Security Council, has been actively involved in the deliberations and decisions of the Council on this issue. Committed as it is to the purposes and principles of the Charter, and having itself been a victim of aggression and of the failure of the community of nations to live up to collectively assumed obligations,

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Ethiopia is very much heartened by the almost unanimous and universal condemnation of the Iraqi action and the collective enforcement measures taken thereafter.

The kind of solidarity extended to Kuwait and the single-mindedness of purpose manifested, particularly among the permanent members of the Security Council, augurs well for the maintenance of world peace and security. Based on this solidarity, we must all persevere in our efforts and take appropriate measures to ensure that aggression and lawlessness do not succeed in this case and in others. For if they do, the new world order that could emerge would be one where the law of the jungle, and not the precepts of justice and legality, would reign supreme.

As I indicated earlier, the current international situation has fostered positive developments in many fields of international endeavour. Unfortunately, this same situation has also given rise to certain anxieties, especially in international economic relations. With the negative trends of the 1980s still continuing, new tendencies have also arisen which could impede international economic co-operation.

As we all recognize, most of the factors which were instrumental for the economies of the developing countries to stagnate, and for those of the least developed among them to regress, are still prevalent today. Commodity prices are continuing to plummet, while the external debt burden of developing countries is growing at an alarming pace. With the fast decline in the flow of concessional and other forms of finance, international interest rates, the price of industrial goods and trade protectionism are all rising. The recent steep increase in the price of oil has further battered the economies of oil-importing developing countries. All these and the existing structural trends, such as population growth and environmental degradation, are thus compounding the plight of the developing world.

(Mr. Dinka, Ethiopia)

To halt and reverse these dangerous trends and alter the unjust international economic environment, developing countries had over the years spearheaded many multilateral initiatives aimed at establishing a new international economic order. Regrettably, however, the response of the developed countries to these initiatives has been far from supportive. Even the programmes which we have jointly embarked upon under the aegis of the United Nations have not given the desired results owing to lack of wholehearted support from our developed partners. Neither have the policy prescriptions of the major international financial institutions - the so-called traditional structural adjustment programmes - proved to be a panacea for the chronic economic ills of our countries.

Worse still, the recent changes at the global level are dimming the prospects for international development co-operation. With the apparent decline of the importance of strategic considerations, development co-operation is losing much of its attraction and impetus. As a result of preoccupations with internal reconstruction, Eastern Europe is virtually ceasing to participate in the efforts towards the development of the third world. The industrialized West is also preoccupied with events in Europe as well as with the consolidation of economic blocs among its members. Furthermore, financial resources are increasingly being allocated to countries of Central and Eastern Europe, while resource flows to the third world are being burdened with onerous political and economic conditions.

In the face of all these unhealthy trends, developing countries are doing their best to meet the challenges of the present-day world. Africa, which is threatened most by the process of marginalization of the third world, has embarked on fundamental socio-economic reorganization. Accordingly, most African countries are taking painful measures to reform their economies and enhance productivity and efficiency.

(Mr. Dinka, Ethiopia)

At the international level too a number of initiatives have been taken aimed at promoting international economic co-operation in the 1990s. In this context, the second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris last month, has, I believe, sufficiently highlighted the very grave situation facing those countries, the large majority of which are African. The programme of action adopted by the Conference represents a solemn commitment to assist the least developed countries overcome their severe developmental problems, and its successful implementation will depend on shared responsibilities and strengthened partnership between them and the donor community.

Convinced as we are that the efforts being undertaken at the international and regional levels to extricate the third world from the quagmire of underdevelopment are merely a complement to national efforts, we in Ethiopia have, despite our difficult situation, embarked upon a process of reform and restructuring. These reform measures include, inter alia, promoting and encouraging the full participation of the private sector in the economy, managing the operations of State enterprises on a competitive basis, and encouraging foreign investment in various fields. These, and the related legal measures that make up the profile of our new economic policy, are primarily intended to stimulate economic growth and national productivity; but, again, we can achieve these objectives only within the context of a supportive international economic climate.

We therefore hope to see generous increases in concessionary assistance, especially to the least developed countries, and the adoption of bold measures to alleviate their debt burdens. We also hope that the regional and economic groupings taking shape among the developed countries and the policies they pursue will not lead to protectionism and restrictions but, rather, to openness and international economic co-operation.

(Mr. Dinka, Ethiopia)

International co-operation must also be extended to the protection of the environment, which is becoming a burning issue of our time. While environmental degradation in the North is the result of industrial progress, the problem in the South is mainly caused by poverty and underdevelopment. Though both the North and the South must follow environmentally sound development po'icies, the South would need the increased assistance of the North in order to halt and reverse the deterioration in the environment of our common habitat.

I should like at this juncture to express our gratification at the successful conclusion of the World Summit for Children, and reaffirm my Government's determination to improve the well-being of all Ethiopian children by implementing fully the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by the Summit.

It is my delegation's considered view that unless the relative amelioration in the international political scene is matched by progress in international economic co-operation, the promise of peace will be a mere mirage. Indeed, if some current trends are not reversed soon, widespread poverty and deprivation in the poorer countries, especially in Africa, will generate social unrest, tension and instability as well as mass displacements of people, with dangerous implications for international peace and stability.

The developing countries, and particularly those in Africa, cannot and will not accept relegation to a perpetual marginal existence. In this small planet of ours, we cannot continue to have two worlds, one characterized by degrading poverty and deprivation, the other by affluence and plenty. Also, we must not allow the East-West confrontation to be replaced by a North-South divide, with the North, at best, attempting to impose its own models of general development and economic growth on the South or, at worst, totally neglecting it.

(Mr. Dinka, Ethiopia)

This session of the General Assembly is, in many ways, the first post-cold-war convocation of nations to deliberate upon all the major issues facing our planet. This makes the present session a unique opportunity to review and assess the world situation from a new perspective and with a fresh approach. Though most of the issues on the agenda of the Assembly have been with us for many years, we must now approach them in a spirit commensurate with the imperatives of the time. Reiteration of old positions and persistent adherence to failed formulas will not suffice to meet and overcome the challenges of today. A new vision and a bold approach which would shape the future of international relations is what the peoples of the world expect from us.

We must therefore nurture and promote the positive trends already developing in the relations between States, big and small, for these should constitute the foundations of the new world order. We must also ensure that the beneficial effects of the improving situation at the global level permeate the entire gamut of international relations, so that the encouraging changes we see today do not carry latent seeds from which new crises may emerge. Let us also extend our unreserved support to the United Nations so that this unique, universal Organization, which embodies the ideals of multilateralism, will attain the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter.

Mr. HERAT (Sri Lanka): On behalf of President Premadasa and the people of Sri Lanka, I extend to the President and to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session our warmest greetings and good wishes. We offer him our special congratulations on his election. That unanimous election is a fitting tribute to his statesmanship as well as to his country. Malta and Sri Lanka have enjoyed close relations, particularly in the Commonwealth forums and in the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation offers him our support and co-operation.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Sri Lanka wishes to express its appreciation of the excellent manner in which the out-going President, Mr. Joseph Garba of Nigeria, conducted the work of the forty-fourth session.

I wish to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his outstanding contribution to strengthening the role of the United Nations in current international affairs.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the delegation of independent Namibia as a full Member of the United Nations. The freedom struggle of the people of Namibia has been one of the most inspiring popular movements of this century, and we are certain that the delegation of Namibia will contribute in good measure towards the success of this session. I also welcome Liechtenstein, as the newest Member of the United Nations.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

As we commence the forty-fifth session, we find ourselves facing a period of complex developments whose course is not yet clear. Some developments offer hope for the future and enhance the prospects for peace, while others are less encouraging.

The improved relationship between the two super-Powers, which control devastating military arsenals, has certainly reduced the threat of a global nuclear conflagration. Yet a sense of euphoria would be premature. Much more remains in their armories to disband. Testing to improve further the lethal effects, accuracy and range of nuclear weapons continues unabated. Regional conflicts and conventional wars continue. The sense of mutual accommodation and understanding that now seems to guide relations between the super-Powers must be extended to cover their relations with the rest of the world. All inter-State relations should be conducted on the firm footing on which the United Nations is founded - respect for the sovereign equality of all States irrespective of their size and power.

We have witnessed several dramatic developments during the past year. East-West rivalry has receded, and a new international order is emerging. Financial power and economic strength rather than military might are emerging as the new determinants of global influence. Yet this is not the end of history, nor even the absolute triumph of one idea over all others. We are still in a period of change.

Tomorrow we shall witness the emergence of a united Germany, and Sri Lanka heartily welcomes that new development. We welcomed the reunification of Yemen earlier this year. We look forward to the successful conclusion of the efforts of the Korean people to overcome its differences and to take its rightful place in the Assembly as a full Member of the United Nations. The international community must encourage the intensification of dialogue in Korea.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

I should also mention that the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation, to which Sri Lanka has the honour to belong with six other South Asian nations, has made remarkable progress during the past year on several programmes of common interest. Those programmes were intended not only to enhance the living standards of the people of our region but also to contribute to world peace and progress.

Despite those favourable developments, we also see in other settings the unhappy consequences of divisive tendencies, be they political, economic or ethnic. Old prejudices have persisted, defying solution. Disparities and inequalities have been aggravated, hindering economic growth and stifling national development. While the debate about alternative economic systems plays itself through, for many developing countries the options have even narrowed.

Many developing countries have had to contend with political and other factors that have been obstacles to progress. Resources best deployed for investment in the future of our peoples have had to be diverted to meet other threats, some of which have even challenged the very existence of States.

Many of those countries have made radical adjustments in their economies, often at the bidding of international financial and lending institutions. However, despite this, the general position is that the stagnation and even decline in their development programmes have not been averted. In the 1990s the trends towards integration of new economic groupings in Europe and the growth of vibrant economic centres in Asia are likely to be accelerated. Ideally, that should lead to a greater openness in world markets. However, some concerted global action is required to prevent any drift towards unilateralism and the construction of walls of protectionism and discrimination that would stifle access of the exports of the developing countries to the affluent markets of the developed world.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

The 1990s will also see the emergence of newly energized economies in Eastern Europe, and it is hoped that that will contribute to the expansion and enrichment of the world economy. Here too, it is essential that the economies of the developing countries should not, for political or economic reasons, be further isolated and ignored in their bid for transfers of technology and scientific knowledge, external resources and credits for other markets. In that connection, Sri Lanka looks forward to the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Economic and Social Council in July 1991, which will study in depth the impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of the developing countries.

The multilateral mechanisms of the United Nations system should be effectively used to promote balanced, even and equitable growth in all sectors of the world economy. While interdependence is now an accepted reality, international economic co-operation has not been adequately advanced. A healthy world economy requires that no single group of countries should remain depressed or isolated. Similarly, in a national economy, it is vital that all people should have the opportunities and the necessary resources to participate productively in the development effort.

In Sri Lanka we are seeking to tap the latent energies of all segments of our people. The poorest of the people are being given a sense of their own worth and dignity by President Premadasa through a programme called Janasaviya, which literally translates as the strength or solidarity of the people. That initiative, rather than providing charity, offers the poorest families the resources required not only to meet their immediate consumer needs but also to participate in productive economic activity. That has helped to release the creative energies of a group that has far too long been considered fit only to receive charity. The

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programme is not a palliative administered in isolation from the general economic context of Sri Lanka. We believe that Janasaviya has a contribution to make to the national economy, just as much as the rest of the country must help the integration of our poor and their involvement in the national development endeavour.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

The provision of suitable housing constitutes important support for the alleviation of poverty as well as for the evolution of stable and viable societies. A housing settlement well integrated with the environment promotes a sense of belonging, builds a feeling of security and encourages community participation among its inhabitants. All this is essential for steady and sustained economic activity.

A proposal made in this Assembly Hall by President Premadasa to declare 1987 the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless has spread its benefits well beyond that year. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 is being implemented as the most ambitious programme that the international community has so far adopted in the field of human settlements. The support of the international community must continue so that the full potential of the Strategy can be realized.

Permit me at this stage to touch on another economic initiative which could bring economic benefit to millions. Last month I had the pleasure of attending the second ministerial meeting of the Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Co-operation (IOMAC) held in Arusha, Tanzania. An Agreement was adopted at the meeting which, once ratified, would formally make IOMAC an inter-governmental organization, with its secretariat in Colombo. IOMAC seeks to develop on the rich promise of the new ocean régime for the economic advancement of millions of people in the Indian Ocean region through inter-regional co-operation, as well as through co-operation with technologically advanced countries. I wish to acknowledge the help of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Co-ordinator of the Office of the Law of the Sea, as well as non-governmental organizations and donor Governments whose support and encouragement has made viable this unique partnership in ocean resources development. My delegation will co-operate with Tanzania, which will be initiating a resolution on IOMAC at this session.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

For some years now, the role of the United Nations in international affairs, political as well as economic, has been a major issue of debate. The pros and cons of multilateral, bilateral, and indeed unilateral, approaches have been discussed in this forum, also in the context of disarmament and the changing great-Power relationship. In the political field, the essence of multilateralism is that global issues are best considered with the participation of all States in a spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation so that solutions eventually reached will have taken serious account of the interests of the States concerned. That super-Power confrontation in the past has obstructed the United Nations in taking decisive action has been a matter for regret. If, by the same token, the emerging super-Power relationship of co-operation were now to facilitate decisive action, it would also be regrettable if in this new situation the interests of the less powerful States were to be neglected.

In the settlement of political issues, the United Nations can play a major role, not only in identifying, on the basis of Charter principles, consensus among all directly affected but also in providing a framework within which the process of implementation can be carried out. This was the case in respect of Namibia. Similarly, the United Nations has other achievements to its credit.

The United Nations and the Secretary-General have played a key role towards the settlement of the complex and interrelated issues involved in the situation in Afghanistan. The Geneva agreements, concluded in April 1988, and the completion of the withdrawal of foreign troops in accordance with these agreements, set the basis for a comprehensive political solution. All parties concerned should work towards the complete cessation of hostilities and the creation of the necessary conditions of peace and normalcy which would enable Afghan refugees to return home in safety and honour.

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(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Regional initiatives, together with efforts of the Secretary-General and the Security Council, have helped bring about favourable developments in respect of Cambodia. Sri Lanka is happy that agreement has now been reached on a framework for a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodia conflict. We welcome in particular the agreement reached by all Cambodian parties at Jakarta to form a supreme national council. We look forward to further successful negotiations which would finalize a plan of implementation to ensure a viable and enduring settlement bringing peace and security to the Cambodian people.

Sri Lanka followed with keen interest the work of the Secretary-General's mission of good offices in respect of Cyprus. The presence of foreign occupation forces in the Republic of Cyprus has remained an obstacle to a lasting settlement of all aspects of this question. Sri Lanka supports the independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of the Republic of Cyprus.

Unlike in the case of Namibia, the efforts of the United Nations have not been successful in respect of South Africa where the abhorrent apartheid system continues to deny the majority of the people their inalienable rights through ruthless forms of repression. The release of the patriot Nelson Mandela offers some hope. However, the essential structures of institutionalized racism remain in place, particularly in the political field, even though the liberation organizations have reiterated a preference for realizing their objectives through peaceful means. Apartheid remains a central factor causing instability even beyond the borders of South Africa. The United Nations should intensify its action in support of the total destruction of apartheid, and the establishment of majority rule in a united, non-racial and democratic society, guaranteeing the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all the peoples of South Africa.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Another major issue that has remained on the United Nations agenda without settlement is the question of Palestine, in many ways the core of the complex of interrelated issues that has for so long denied the Middle East region peace and security. Sri Lanka believes that the question of Palestine can be settled only on the basis of the recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories. Only this can guarantee the security of all States in the Middle East within secure and internationally recognized borders. Various bilateral and multilateral efforts towards a settlement of the Palestine question continue. An international conference on the Middle East, as called for by the United Nations, with the full participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, would be the most appropriate framework to consider the question of Palestine.

A further flash-point of tension and conflict has now arisen in the Middle East. Sri Lanka has been greatly distressed that the dispute between Kuwait and Iraq, which was under discussion in the Arab League, could not be settled through negotiations and has led to the Iraqi military intervention in Kuwait. Sri Lanka upholds the principle of the sovereign equality and independence of all States. We call for the peaceful settlement of disputes and oppose the threat or use of force. These are unshakeable principles. Sri Lanka expresses the fervent hope that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and those of the Non-Aligned Movement will be applied to the situation in Kuwait and that it will be possible to reach a settlement enabling the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and a settlement of the disputes at issue between Iraq and Kuwait. The Government of Sri Lanka has taken necessary steps to comply fully with the Security Council resolutions on the issue.

The current situation in Kuwait has also caused human, social and economic problems of massive dimensions. Hundreds of thousands of guest workers in Kuwait

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

have left or are leaving Kuwait under conditions of great difficulty. Sri Lanka has been one of the worst affected; out of more than 100,000 employed in Kuwait, over 90 per cent are female workers, hailing mainly from a rural background and innocent victims of this conflict. Many have endured severe hardships and have lost the fruits of years of labour. My Government is now making arrangements at considerable cost to evacuate those helpless persons. We express our sincere appreciation to all those Governments and organizations which have helped Sri Lanka in carrying out this responsibility.

The recent developments in Kuwait and other affected areas have also imposed a heavy burden on Sri Lanka's economy, as no doubt on the economies of other countries. The World Bank has particularly identified the economies of South Asia as those which have been most adversely affected by the developments in Kuwait, including the loss of important exports to the region, the loss of remittances of expatriate workers and the rising price of oil.

These developments in the Gulf area have also underlined the imperative need for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. This Assembly has repeatedly reaffirmed its conviction that concrete action for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security, as well as to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful development of the States of the region. Sri Lanka regrets that it has not been possible this year to adopt a consensus resolution in the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. We sincerely hope that those States that have felt it necessary to withdraw from the Committee will soon be able to return to it and work together with the Indian Ocean States and others. Sri Lanka, for its own part, remains committed to hosting the United Nations Conference on the

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(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Indian Ocean in 1992, and we welcome any suggestions that would make possible a successful and result-oriented Conference.

Permit me to say a few words on the situation in Sri Lanka, which has figured - not always without distortion - in the international media. We have had to face a serious threat to our territorial integrity when separatist violence reached its peak in the island. A fragment of the Tamil community in the country took to terrorism in order to force their demands on the rest of Sri Lanka. A period of violence and instability in the northern areas ensued, claiming a death toll of several hundred.

Matters deteriorated to the point when the Government at the time, in 1987, agreed to the introduction of an Indian peace-keeping force into the affected areas. Despite a bloody campaign lasting two years, those forces were unable to bring peace to Sri Lanka or halt the terrorist violence.

President Premadasa appealed to all militant groups to negotiate their grievances peacefully and participate freely in the democratic processes to which Sri Lanka has long been committed. The militant groups, including the most uncompromising among them, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), responded positively to this appeal. The Government then proceeded to a dialogue with those groups. Meanwhile, at the request of President Premadasa, the Indian peace-keeping force was also withdrawn from Sri Lanka.

However, virtually in the midst of the negotiations, the LTTE, in June of this year, plunged the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka into violence and chaos, ruthlessly attacking police posts and even policemen who had already laid down their arms. The LTTE, intolerant of any opposition to its vision of a mono-ethnic secessionist state, systematically eliminated leaders and cadres of rival Tamil parties.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Civilians were similarly massacred. The Government had no option in this situation but to take all possible steps to safeguard the lives of those under threat and to halt the LTTE in its bloody tracks.

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

Negotiations with all parties other than the LTTE continue under the direct guidance of the President himself on the basis of his negotiating triad of consultation, compromise and consensus. The conflict in Sri Lanka is thus one against the LTTE, which has rejected the negotiating option acceptable to all others, and is therefore not against the Tamil community.

Many civilian lives have been lost; several cold-blooded massacres of the Muslim community in the Eastern Province have left hundreds dead. Tens of thousands of Sri Lankans of all communities have been forced to flee the Northern and Eastern Provinces, where the LTTE has been active, to the safety of other parts of Sri Lanka, where all communities are able to live in harmony. Movement of food supplies and the operation of essential services are obstructed by the LTTE. A massive exercise has been mounted by the Government, with the support and help of international agencies, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, to ensure that essential food supplies reach the civilians and the refugees.

The Sri Lanka Government remains open to a political settlement of the ethnic question. However, to be part of the process, the LTTE must forswear violence and abandon arms. Any party which seeks to represent the Tamil minority must through democratic means seek the votes of the people. No one can represent the people through the hidden bomb, the landmine and the gun.

The LTTE's external ramifications, including its links with other terrorist groups as well as international drug cartels, are extensive. An evil trinity of international terrorism, drug trafficking and the illegal arms trade clearly exists and requires nothing less than a global effort to destroy it. Many of the problems each State must face are indeed problems we all share and need to confront together.

Technology, which knows no national boundaries, has given us nuclear overkill, the dubious capability to destroy ourselves several times over. Happier

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

applications of science and technology have, of course, improved the quality of life for some of us, shrunk distances, spread knowledge and made us more conscious of each other. At the same time, we realize that, despite these advances, the resources of planet Earth, which makes all this possible, are not infinite. We need to manage and utilize these limited resources more rationally and more equitably. The myopic and greedy depletion of these resources will not only exhaust them, but also cause irreparable harm to the Earth's environment and pose unknown dangers to life on Earth, particularly if the protection and preservation of the environment are not understood and accepted as a national and global imperative.

Sri Lanka is a small island of about 25,000 square miles, where the preservation of the environment is one of the country's major priorities - at State level, as well as at other levels, involving the people, including children. We should also like to make a modest contribution to the international consideration of the issues involved. Sri Lanka offers Colombo as the venue for the 19th General Assembly of the World Conservation Union in 1993.

Two days ago this Assembly was the venue of a historic Children's Summit. The Summit declared, inter alia in paragraph 8 of its Declaration:

> "Together, our nations have the means and the knowledge to protect the lives and to diminish enormously the suffering of children, to promote the full development of their human potential and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities."

It rightly concluded that recent improvements in the international political climate could facilitate the task.

Each of us here represents a nation State, and therefore the United Nations is, in a sense, a Parliament of Nations. Together, we hold the world in trust for our children. We owe them at least the duty to leave this planet not much worse

(Mr. Herat, Sri Lanka)

than when we inherited it from the generations before us. This is the minimum responsibility we are expected to fulfil; let us not neglect it.

In conclusion, I reaffirm my country's unstinted encouragement and support for all the activities of the United Nations to achieve the cherished objectives enshrined in its Charter.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have heard the last speaker for this meeting.

I call on the representative of Iraq, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The statement by the representative of the Zionist entity yesterday was no more than another pathetic failed attempt to distort the facts, turn them inside out and rearrange them in line with the well known Zionist outlook. Also, it was a further reaffirmation of the expansionist, aggressive and terroristic nature of that entity, which has installed itself on the usurped Palestinian soil over the past few decades.

The history of that Israeli entity, which is built on crime, murder, expulsions, the demolition of homes, the burning of cities, and the perpetual brutality of the iron-fist policy is symptomatic of the feelings of military and racial supremacy which bespeak the true nature of those criminal gangs that wallow in the blood of scientists, innocents and children, and who, to this day, continue to reject every peace initiative just exactly as they have done for the past 40 years, even when it is the initiative of its allies.

(Mr. Mohammed, Iraq)

And yet the Zionist representative had it in him to stand here yesterday and, without shame, speak of such things as peace, freedom and legality. He should never lose sight of the fact that his is the only Government in the world that has at its head a professional terrorist, whose history is well known to all from the days of his membership of the Haganah terrorist organization.

(Mr. Mohammed, Iraq)

The massacre in Palestine of Deir Yassin attests to his criminality. He is still wanted for trial in certain European countries. I have no need here to go into the details of the crimes committed by this régime against Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Syria and its occupation of the Arab territories. Neither do I have any need here to recall in detail the acts committed by those gangs against the children of the courageous intifadah - which continues in the face of all the brutal acts of repression and terrorism.

Everyone is well aware of the revelations which appear daily concerning that entity's exploits and acts of terrorism and espionage in the United States, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Italy. This makes it an outlaw entity that should be expelled from this world Organization, and not allow its representative to insult Iraq, the Arab world and the United Nations itself.

This criminal régime still insists that its aggression against Iraq in 1981 was a legitimate act, although that criminal act of aggression was condemned by the United Nations, the Security Council and by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Zionist entity blackmails the Arabs and even its own allies, through its monopoly of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, its Mossad assassinations and its spying on both the allies and adversaries of Zionism. The case of the spy, Jonathan Pollard in the United States is a prime example of this activity.

The entity's racist policy, which is based on expansion at the expense of the Arab nation and the world at large, cannot continue. Otherwise it will sow terror throughout the region. An international, regional and Arab deterrent must emerge and stop it in its tracks, particularly since the Zionist entity persists, in the context of its new expansionist drive, in installing new Jewish emigrants in the occupied Arab territories. In order for it to achieve this objective, it has to liquidate the Palestinian intifadah and to expell the Palestinians from their own

(Mr. Mohammed, Iraq)

land. Iraq is proud to be the Arab State that will not allow any new Israeli aggression against the Arab nation to go unpunished. Iraq is proud that its military forces and its military industries are wholly for the legitimate purpose of self-defence and not for any criminal acts of aggression, as is the case with the forces of the two international terrorists, Shamir and Sharon. That indeed is the cause of the imperialist Zionist aggression against Iraq.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.